

**WOMAN KILLING:
INTIMATE FEMICIDE IN SASKATCHEWAN 1988-1992**

A Thesis Submitted to the
College of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Education
in the Department of Educational Psychology
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

By
Deborah Farden
August, 1996

The author claims copyright. Use shall not be made of the material in this document without proper acknowledgement.

ABSTRACT

The term femicide was used to refer to the murder of women. Intimate femicide referred to the murder of women by men with whom they had an intimate love relationship. The purpose of this research was to make visible the intimate and domestic nature of femicide by describing all femicides in Saskatchewan between 1988 and 1992 inclusive. A second purpose of this research was to learn about prevention both from committed femicides and from two women who had survived an attempted intimate femicide. This research was feminist in nature and utilized elements of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Data were gathered on all women known to be murdered between 1988 and 1992 from sources such as newspaper searches, coroners' reports, and police files. Based on these data, femicides were classified as intimate or non-intimate femicides and as possibly preventable or not preventable within the femicidal incident itself. Further data were gathered from interviews with two women who had survived an attempted intimate femicidal attack. Both sets of data were then reviewed and themes relating to the prevention of femicide were elicited. These themes focussed on failures of the communities in which these women resided or were murdered, failures of the medical community to correctly identify femicidal men, failures of the judicial system in their dealings with femicidal men, failures of the organized

church, and failures of the institution of the family. Ten femicides were classified as possibly preventable within the femicidal assault itself. In addition, the interviews with both survivors identified many areas of possible intervention relating to prevention over a longer period of time. The study concludes with my reflections on the process of engaging in research on femicide, discussions about areas for further research and the identification of possible implications for public policy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge and express my gratitude to all those people who made this research possible.

To my thesis supervisor, Dr. Fred Reekie, who agreed to supervise this research when others told me it was "impossible", and who was willing to struggle with me when I felt I could not go on, I offer my heartfelt thanks.

To my committe members--Dianne Hallman, whose willingness to consult with me and to talk with me about how I felt, validated the incredible pain and anger I sometimes experienced; Karen Wright, who never failed to ask how things were going; and to Marie Batiste, who reminded me that there were many perspectives-- I am deeply grateful.

To the Honourable Bob Mitchell, QC, then Minister of Justice, I wish to extend my appreciation. Without the assistance of the Department of Justice, this research would not have been possible. I also wish to thank Mr. Alan Campbell (Policy Planning and Development), Mr. John Baker (Head of Policing for Saskatchewan), Dr. Diane Stephenson and Mr. Roger Pick (Coroners Branch), Inspector Murray Sawatsky and Sgt. Joe Dosenberger (RCMP), Inspector Scultz (Saskatoon City Police), Corporal Pat Devin and Police Chief Greg McCullagh (Prince Albert City Police) and representatives from

the Regina City Police and the Moose Jaw City Police forces. I extend a special thanks to the clerical staff in all the locations in which I reviewed femicide files for their help and co-operation.

To Marcia Clark, the Directors of the Saskatoon Family Service Bureau, and my colleagues, whose varied support in terms of time away from work, offers of free counselling for the interview participants, and personal encouragement helped make this research possible, I am indebted to you.

Finally, I thank my family and friends. To Naomi, who steadfastly believed in me and challenged me editorially and emotionally to keep going, thanks for being a "lifer" friend. To Marian, who kept listening to the horror of what I heard without closing her ears, you helped more than you know. To Dolores, who heard my heart cry, I am grateful. To my mother, Helen, who gave me a sense of justice and the knowledge that I would survive, thanks for your unconditional love. To my daughter, April, who reminded me over and over again not to get lost in "all this depressing stuff", thank you for grounding me firmly in my world. Last of all, I wish to acknowledge my husband, Francis, who dared to love me through all that this research has meant, thank you for being my companion.

DEDICATION

I wish to begin by acknowledging the values and life events that have shaped this research. This research reflects my experiences as a counsellor for women who experienced violence in intimate adult relationships. It also reflects my feminism, my faith in my Creator, and my pervasive belief in non-violent methods of problem-solving and peacemaking.

From 1983 to 1990 I worked as a counsellor in a shelter for women who were physically assaulted by intimate partners. On December 3, 1986, a woman with whom I had had a counselling relationship was murdered by a person or persons then unknown. In February 1990, I was subpoenaed to testify at the trial of her killer--on behalf of one of the men accused of killing her, a man alleged to have been hired by her husband. I never forgot this woman, her life's story, and my feelings at the trial. It is in honour of this woman, that I decided to conduct research on intimate femicide, the murder of women by those with whom they have had a love relationship. She once told me that I had inspired greatness in her; she has inspired this thesis. She was the first person I ever knew who was murdered, and her murder was an intimate femicide.

This thesis is^s my attempt to honour those women who have so needlessly been killed by intimate partners and those women who found a way to stay alive. Their courage and their struggle should never be forgotten. I dedicate this thesis to them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	xi

Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
What we Know About Femicide	2
Why Study Femicide	6
Our Understanding of Intimate Femicide	7
The Potential for Undercounting Femicide	7
The Language of Implied Blame for Being Victimized	8
Gender Differences in Male and Female Murder Victims	8
Why Research Femicide in Saskatchewan	9
Research Question	11
Definition of Terms	12
2. METHODOLOGY	13
Purpose	13
Research Methods	13
Elements of Feminist Research	14
Statement of Guiding Principles	14
Data Collection	17
Official Statistics on Homicide	17
Coroners Branch	17
Police Records	19
Unofficial Sources of Data	20
Newspaper Articles	20
Shelter Workers	21
Attempted Intimate Femicide Survivors	21
The Data Collection Form	21
Compiling and Cross-Checking the Data	22
Interviewing Two Survivors of Attempted Intimate Femicide	23
Analyzing the Data	25
Quantitative Data	25
Qualitative Data	25
Content Analysis of Two Case Studies	25
Triangulation	26
Credibility	26

Limitations	27
Ethical Concerns	29
3. RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE ANALYSES	32
Results of Newspaper Search	32
What Did I Learn About Femicide in Saskatchewan	36
Days of Week and Times of Day	37
Ages of Victims and Killers	38
Relationship Status of Victims and Killers	39
Witnesses to Murders	40
Parental Status of Victims and Killers	43
Employment Status of Victims and Killers	44
Race of Victims and Killers	45
Criminal Record of Victims and Killers	46
Alcohol/Drug Use by Victims and Killers	47
Relationship Between Victim and Killer	47
Suicides	48
History of Prior Violence by Victims and Killers	49
Prior Police Involvement	50
Geographic Location	51
Location of the Crime	51
Method of Killing	52
Multiple Methods or Overkill	53
Motives for Killings	53
Number of Victims	55
Sexualized Elements Within Killings	56
Charges and Outcomes of Charges Laid	57
Summary of Data on all Femicides	58
Results of Research on Prevention	60
Prevention Within the Femicidal Incident	60
Summary	66
4. TWO WOMEN'S STORIES	69
Rena's Story	69
Marilyn's Story	97
5. DEVELOPMENT OF PREVENTIVE THEMES FROM INTERVIEWS	157
Themes	158
Judicial Intervention	159
Church/Divine Intervention	162
Medical Intervention	166

Family Factors	169
Community Factors	171
Summary.	176
6. INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS	178
The Community	180
Home as Private	181
Women as Property	182
Historic Legitimacy of Women as Property and Subject to Men	183
Judicial System Concerns	184
Medical Institutions	189
Racism	191
Media Reporting on Femicides as a Reflection of Racist and Male Perspectives	192
Summary.	194
7. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	196
Recommendations for Public Policy	196
Areas for Further Study	199
My Experience	201
Summary	202
8. REFERENCES	203
APPENDICES.	207

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to make visible the intimate and domestic character of femicide by describing all femicides in Saskatchewan from 1988-1992 and by determining the number of those women killed by intimate male partners. Because intimate femicide may well be the most preventable of all homicides, a second purpose of this thesis is to learn what we can about prevention from women who have survived an attempted intimate femicide.

An understanding of the terms "femicide" and "intimate femicide" is essential to understanding this research. Femicide is a term used to describe the killing of a woman by another person (Crawford & Gartner, 1992). This term includes the range of killings from "manslaughter" to "first degree murder" but does not include the killing of women in self-defense. Radford and Russell (1992) applied the term to those who were killed because they were women; however, I will use the term in its broadest sense in this research. Intimate femicide is the term used to describe those women "killed by intimate male partners, that is, legal spouses, common-law spouses, and boyfriends, whether current or estranged" (Crawford & Gartner, 1992, p. 27). This term directly reflects the relational and intimate nature of their killings. The majority of women victims

are killed by men whom they knew intimately (Browne & Williams, 1989; Crawford & Gartner, 1992; Daly & Wilson, 1988).

What We Know About Femicide

Canada is more violent today than 30 years ago. In the late fifties and sixties, there were half as many homicides per capita as there are today. Between 1966 and 1975, the homicide rate doubled, and violent crimes of all description escalated (Boyd, 1988). As the rate of male homicide escalated so did the rate of femicide (Gartner & McCarthy, 1991). A similar phenomenon was observed in other developed nations of the world (Daly & Wilson, 1988).

Boyd (1988) stated that "the story of murder, the most serious of all homicide offenses, is fairly described as the story of male violence, whether directed at women or at other males" (p.3). Ninety-eight percent of Canada's convicted murderers are male. The Canadian murder rate is about 2 per 100,000. This translates into approximately 650 murders every year. Of these, approximately 100 killings are the murders of women (Crawford & Gartner, 1992).

Femicide, the murder of women, has traditionally been included in the term homicide; however, researchers such as Gartner and McCarthy (1991) and Gartner, Baker,

and Pampel (1990) do not believe that the prevailing theories of homicide adequately fit when the victim of murder is a woman. They believe that the unique features of the murder of women are masked or lost within a study of homicide that does not take the gender of the victim into account.

Current statistics distinguish homicide by gender, but do not differentiate the characteristics of femicide from male homicide, and do not distinguish intimate femicide within the category of murdered women (Boyd, 1988; Crawford & Gartner, 1992; Daly & Wilson, 1988).

According to Bohannan (1960), "homicide is a social relationship and that, to be understood, the social relationship between killer and victim must be seen in its institutional setting with regularities and patterns noted" (p. 236). He hypothesized that women's lack of participation in institutions, other than domestic ones, accounted for the pattern of women as domestic homicide victims. However, as women's participation in institutions other than domestic has increased, femicide remains largely domestic in nature (Crawford & Gartner, 1992; Gartner, Baker, & Pampel, 1990; Gartner & McCarthy, 1991). Bohannan went on to ask the question, "What roles in society are homicidogenic?" (p. 236). In other words, what roles in society are most likely to result in death

by homicide? For women, that role may well be an intimate relationship with a violent man.

A study by Crawford and Gartner (1992) outlined, for the first time, the features of intimate femicide in a Canadian province. The study was largely descriptive and included all known femicides in Ontario between 1974 and 1990. They looked at a number of demographic features in their exploration of intimate femicide. The demographic features in their study included:

1. the incidence or rate of femicide and intimate femicide,
2. intimate femicide compared to spousal killings of men,
3. intimate femicide rates in Ontario and the rest of Canada,
4. intimate femicide in Ontario's cities and towns,
5. the victims of intimate femicide,
6. men who kill their intimate partners,
7. relationships between victims and their killers,
8. women with particularly high risks of intimate femicide,
9. motives for intimate femicide,
10. locations of intimate femicide,
11. the magnitude and sexualized nature of the violence, and
12. the extent of the victimization.

Crawford and Gartner concluded that women were at greatest risk of femicide if their male partners believed they were leaving or separating from them, whether or not this was in fact true. This has been noted in other research as well (Browne & Williams, 1989; Daly & Wilson, 1988). In fact, a recent survey of over 12,000 women revealed that violence against women often begins or escalates upon separation from their male partners (Statistics Canada, 1993). A corresponding generalized pattern of increased female violence towards male partners, upon feared or actual separation, was not evident in the literature.

In addition to the pattern of men killing their partners who were in the process of separating, Crawford and Gartner (1992) noted regional patterns in the femicide rates within Canada as a whole. The rate of femicide is lowest in Ontario (.75 per 100,000 women), followed by the provinces east of Ontario (.9 per 100,000), and highest in the provinces west of Ontario (2 per 100,000). The annual Canadian femicide rate is .83 per 100,000 women (Crawford & Gartner, 1992). In Saskatchewan, the femicide rate is about 2 per 100,000. This is consistent with the rates west of Ontario. According to Crawford and Gartner (1992), femicide is different from homicide in that, while men usually murder other men, women do not usually kill other women.

Rather, it is usually men who kill women, and on the rare occasions when women kill, they usually kill a male with whom they have been intimate and who has been violent to them. In fact, a battered woman defense has been legislated to address the lack of power and control that women have and recognizes the necessity of their killing their violent partners as a special form of self-defense. I did not find any references to intimate lesbian femicide in my literature search.

Why Study Femicide?

While much has been written about women who kill (Browne, 1987; Goetting, 1987; Jones, 1980), little has been written about the far greater numbers of women who are killed by those intimate to them. The stories of these women have been largely forgotten. Society knows little about their final struggle. The language which has been used in the study of women as victims has, at times, implied that women are responsible for their own dying. However, gender is a salient feature of homicide as femicides do not fit the prevailing theories of homicide.

Society needs to understand intimate femicide in order to begin to address the possibility that we are undercounting intimate femicide by inaccurately attributing some women's deaths to suicidal or accidental

causes. People in general, policy makers, and professionals who work with abused women and abusers need to understand more fully how femicides are the same as and differ from male homicides in order to begin to work towards prevention. I will discuss each of these points in the following section.

Our Understanding of Intimate Femicide

While society's understanding of the dynamics of male violence in intimate relationships has grown considerably, its understanding of which relationships end in murder is more limited. Whether or not some intimate femicides are more preventable than others remains unclear. If some femicides are preventable, which ones are they?

The Potential for Undercounting Femicide

Crawford and Gartner (1992) engaged in a broad discussion of the potential for undercounting the actual number of intimate femicides. Undercounting is most likely to occur among women listed as missing persons, and among women whose deaths are listed as suicidal or accidental when they were actually killed by a male intimate. According to Radford and Russell (1992), police in the United States agree that they do not have accurate counts of intimate femicide.

The Language of Implied Blame for Being Victimized

The language used in previous writing on women as victims of homicide has, at times, implicitly held women responsible for their own dying. For example, Bohannon (1960) referred to the pattern of women killed as "their pattern as domestic homicide victims." The words "their pattern" imply that their dying is something about "them," and that belongs to them, as women. Subsequent research, however, suggests that the killing of women is about male power, as evidenced by the predominant motives for woman-killing--namely, jealousy and feared or actual separation (Crawford & Gartner, 1992; Daly & Wilson, 1988).

Gender Differences in Male and Female Murder Victims

In general, men are three times more likely to be murdered than are women; however, the majority of killers of both men and women are men. Approximately 60% of all femicides are intimate femicides while only 8% of male homicides were spousal killings (Boyd, 1988; Gartner & McCarthy, 1991). In addition, an Ontario study found that women were more likely to be killed by an intimate partner if they worked outside the home prior to 1981. After 1981, however, they were more likely to be killed if they were full-time homemakers. Men were more likely to kill if they were not employed outside the home (Crawford & Gartner, 1992).

Why Research Femicide in Saskatchewan?

Both Ontario and Nova Scotia have conducted research on the commission of femicide in their provinces (Crawford and Gartner, 1992; Mahon, 1995). Both studies described an intimate and domestic phenomenon. However, research is required from all regions of Canada and, to date, none has been done on femicide rates in Saskatchewan. There are several reasons for conducting this study in Saskatchewan.

Both Boyd (1988) and Crawford and Gartner (1992) identified differences in femicide rates across Canada with the rate of femicide being highest in the provinces west of Ontario. Both Ontario and Nova Scotia have rates of femicide considerably lower than that in Saskatchewan.

As well, there are regional differences in the extent of the urbanization of the population which may be a salient feature of intimate femicide in Saskatchewan. The relative isolation of rural and reserve women and the lack of shelter services available to them may be factors in their killings.

In the study of intimate femicide in Ontario, no divorced women were murdered by intimate partners; however, in Saskatchewan, in a highly publicized intimate femicide, Joanne Wilson was divorced from the man convicted of her murder (The StarPhoenix [Saskatoon], Nov. 7, 1984). Is the rate of intimate femicide for

divorced women lower than for married, common-law, or separated women?

An American study (Browne & Williams, 1989) indicated that, in 26 of 42 states with shelter services, there had been a slight decrease in or a constant rate of the spousal killings of men, but there had been a slight rise in the rates of spousal killings of women. The Crawford and Gartner (1992) study revealed a similar trend in Ontario. "The rate at which males were killed by acquaintances, friends, and strangers changed little from the period 1974-1981 to the period 1982-1989" (p. 36). Male victimization by non-intimates declined by about 5%; whereas, male victimization by spouses declined by 38%. "In contrast, the average rate at which women were killed by their spouses was only 6% lower in the years after 1981, and was not significantly different from the 1974-1981 period" (p. 35). Is there a similar trend in Saskatchewan?

Finally, the compilation of these data for Saskatchewan can facilitate a comparison with Ontario and Nova Scotia and provide a base for a nationwide study of intimate femicide that would take into account regional differences in the development of public policy aimed at preventing femicide.

Research Question

In this thesis, I will investigate the Saskatchewan experience of femicide from 1988 to 1992 inclusive. Within this thesis, I will also describe the experiences of two women who survived an attempted intimate femicide-to give voice to their experience. From their experiences, I believe society can learn how to prevent intimate femicide. This research is written from a feminist perspective in which the lives and deaths of the women are honoured.

This research will address three questions. What is the nature of femicide in Saskatchewan? What can we learn from the deaths of women killed by men with whom they had an intimate relationship? What can we learn from women who have survived an attempted intimate femicide?

I want to increase awareness about intimate femicide among the general public with an eye to prevention. According to Browne and Williams (1989), a review of the police records in Detroit and Kansas City showed that, "In 90% of domestic homicides police had responded to a disturbance call at the home at least once during the two years prior to the fatal incident, and in over half (54%) of the cases they had been called 5 or more times" (p. 92). If this trend holds across geographic locations,

intimate femicide may well be the most preventable of all homicides.

Definition of Terms

The terms that follow will be used to convey the specific meanings described.

Femicide is the term used to describe the murder of a woman.

Intimate Femicide is the term used to describe those women murdered by a man with whom they had an intimate relationship. These intimate men include lovers, ex-lovers, boyfriends, ex-boyfriends, husbands, ex-husbands, common-law partners, or ex-common-law partners.

Overkill means either that more than one method was employed in the murder, or that more force was used than was required to kill.

Municipal area is defined as one which had its own municipal police force rather than a Royal Canadian Mounted Police office.

Survivor, in this research, refers to women who survived an attempted intimate femicide.

Sex crime is any crime involving sexual contact.

Aboriginal includes all people of North American Indian ancestry. I accepted the police designation of racial origin as accurate though it was not clear to me from the police files how racial designations were made.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I state the goals of this thesis, outline the research methods, elucidate the mechanisms of data collection and data analysis, address ethical concerns, and outline the limitations of the study.

Purpose

The purposes of this research are:

1. to describe the nature of femicide in Saskatchewan between 1988 and 1992 inclusive;
2. to describe the experiences of two women who have survived an attempted intimate femicide; and
3. to learn about the prevention of intimate femicide, from those women who have been killed, and from two women who survived an attempted intimate femicide.

Research Methods

My approach in this research is feminist. Rather than being value-neutral, it is consistent with feminist thought that violence against women, particularly in the "domestic" sphere, is neither coincidental nor inevitable. "Domestic violence" is a playing out of the

power imbalance that exists between women and men on a larger societal level (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

Elements of Feminist Research

This research was guided by feminist research principles and utilized elements of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative elements were applied to the data on femicides and qualitative elements were applied to the interviews with survivors of attempted intimate femicide. My approach was feminist in that:

1. I was studying and naming women's experience from the perspectives of women
2. I was attempting to improve social conditions in the lives of all women as women as a group experience many forms of oppression
3. My approach with the participants of this research was collaborative and cooperative as their experience directed the research. Further, they had some control over the information about them that was included in this thesis (Eichler, 1988).
4. My analysis and interpretation of the data was guided by previous feminist research and scholarship.

Statement of Guiding Principles

Certain principles, derived from the work of Neilsen (1990), informed this research.

I attempted to re-create the voices of the women who were the subjects of this research. This was perhaps the most difficult principle to adhere to and I inevitably fell short. Those who have died have been silenced forever, and I could not duplicate their voices. I attempted to give them voice through two women whose intimate partners attempted to kill them.

I have attempted to acknowledge the values and experiences that influenced my decision to engage in research on intimate femicide and that determined my conduct.

This research attempted to make visible those women who died because they were women. I have attempted to make visible that which has been invisible and that which has perpetuated the oppression of women.

The participants experienced the process of telling their stories about survival and their views about what might help prevent future femicides to be emancipatory. For me, the act of doing this thesis in a feminist manner was also emancipatory as, at last, I felt I was making a significant contribution towards ending violence against women in intimate relationships. This was in line with Neilsen's (1990) principle that feminist research should

be emancipatory and empowering for both participants and researchers.

This research has practical implications for positive social change in the lives of women in that it broadened our knowledge of intimate femicide, and can point us in the direction of public policy that will be more effective in eliminating violence against women.

In addition, this research has implications for the ways in which mental health professionals counsel "battered" women. Traditionally, women are questioned as to why they stay and tolerate the abuse, as if the choice of ending the violence rests with them, and leaving guarantees an end to the violence. This study is consistent with the Ontario (Crawford & Gartner, 1992) and Nova Scotia (Mahon, 1995) studies in that women who were separated, or whose partners feared they would leave (whether real or imagined), were at the greatest risk of intimate femicide. These findings challenge the assumptions of mental health professionals that **a woman's staying and putting up with** abuse is a factor in the violence. Perhaps we can truly begin to see male violence against women in intimate relationships as a male problem.

I plan to publish this report in summary form and to make it available to the general reading public for a small fee. In addition, this report will be written in

language that is easily understandable, and I will refrain from the use of highly academic or obscure words. In this way, I will attempt to ensure that the research analyses are broadly accessible rather than restricted to academic or professional journals (Neilson, 1990; Eichler, 1988).

Data Collection

Data were collected from official statistics on homicide such as Statistics Canada, coroners' records, and police records. In addition, I was able to tap less formal sources of data such as interviews with women who survived an attempted intimate femicide as well as newspaper articles.

Official Statistics on Homicide

Coroners Branch.

I had intended to follow the Crawford and Gartner (1992) research design as closely as possible; however, structural barriers necessitated some changes. I was forced to limit the years of the study to 1988 to 1992 instead of going back to 1974. Saskatchewan did not have a Coroners Branch until 1976, had no Chief Coroner until 1978, and currently has only three staff members (only one of whom is full-time). The Coroners Branch was unable to access files prior to 1988 without significant hardship or increased funding.

As well, the Coroners Branch was initially willing to allow only limited access to their files. The information they released included the dates and jurisdictions of all femicides from 1988 to 1992 inclusive (Appendix A). Based on this information, I compiled a list of 36 women, by date and jurisdiction of death, aged 15 and over, whose deaths were classified as homicides. On the basis of date and age, I conducted the newspaper search to find out whether or not these killings were reported in the newspapers and, if so, how were they dealt with. Four additional femicides came forward through newspaper reports and police records.

The Coroners Branch was an important element in this research. All known deaths are recorded by the Coroners Branch. Since it is the Coroners Branch which determines the cause of death, the procedure of classification was of great interest to me as there is potential for the undercounting of femicide due to misclassification as accident or suicide. Finally, the coroners' reports included medical information on the condition of the body which provided details as to how these women were killed. It also cited medical evidence of previous violence against them as well as physical evidence of suicide attempts (i.e., slash marks on the wrists or throat).

Information from available sources was recorded on the Data Collection Form (Appendix B). Where available

in police records, this included coroners' reports; however, not all police records contained coroners' reports. In these instances, I was usually able to access the coroner's report through the request of the police officer who supervised my research for that particular femicide. Data from the other available sources included police records and newspaper clippings.

Police Records.

Initially, I contacted the police chief in my municipality for permission to access their files on all female homicides between 1988 and 1992 inclusive. This request was denied. As I did not anticipate a different response from the other police chiefs, and since I still required approval from the Department of Justice to access Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) files, I wrote a letter to the Provincial Minister of Justice outlining my request and summarizing my research. His office subsequently arranged a meeting with a representative from Justice Policy, Planning and Evaluation Branch and with the Head of Policing for the Province. At this meeting, agreements were made regarding confidentiality of victims, witnesses, investigating officers, and families, as well as access to RCMP files. The Head of Policing also agreed to write a letter to all relevant police chiefs in the province encouraging their co-operation. He stated, however, that

he would not order anyone to co-operate. After he sent this letter to the relevant police chiefs, I was readily able to access municipal police records. I also contacted the F Division of the RCMP requesting permission to access their files for any femicides in their jurisdictions. However, I then had to take the required paperwork back to the bottom of the RCMP hierarchy and up the ranks until all the required approval was obtained. The verbal agreement was made on Dec. 5, 1994; however, this approval was not officially cleared through the required channels until June 14, 1995 when I received the approving fax from the F Division of the RCMP (Appendix C).

In addition to providing more information, these records also served as a cross-check in determining whether a femicide was an intimate femicide.

Unofficial Sources of Data

Sources such as newspaper articles, shelter workers, and women who have survived an attempted intimate femicide were the unofficial sources of data.

Newspaper Articles.

I used newspaper articles to draw a media portrait of femicide in Saskatchewan, with a particular focus on intimate femicide. In addition, a newspaper search was conducted surrounding the dates of each femicide (Appendix D). These searches did not reveal new

information not available in official records, except in one instance.

Shelter Workers.

I made an appeal to shelter workers and others who work with "family" violence to find two women willing to tell their stories of surviving an attempted intimate femicide. In addition, I asked workers to speak with any women who appeared to have survived a suicide attempt or an accident which was later confirmed to be attempted intimate femicide. Although one shelter worker recalled two such attempts, I was unable to contact anyone for an interview.

Attempted Intimate Femicide Survivors.

I interviewed two women about their experience of surviving an attempted intimate femicide. I gathered information about their experience and about the role of other people and institutions in the violence in their lives prior to the attempt on their lives.

The Data Collection Form

I used the Data Collection Form (Appendix B) developed by Crawford and Gartner (1992) in their study of intimate femicide in Ontario. With this form, "as many as 49 different characteristics of the victim, her killer, their relationship, the circumstances surrounding

the crime, and the legal response to the crime could be recorded" (p. 17).

One Data Collection Form was used for each intimate femicide. Information from all sources on any one femicide was recorded on the same Data Collection Form. Any discrepancies among sources were noted. A case narrative providing greater detail and background was recorded on the back.

Substantive differences in data from file to file were present in this study and resulted in incomplete data for some cases of intimate femicide. For example, not all police officers recorded details such as race, education, previous history of violence, or previous police contact with victim or offender. Further, not all police records contained coroners' reports; some merely recorded a summary of the report and some contained no record at all. These differences may reflect the individual preferences of those involved in the investigation, or inconsistencies in public recordkeeping.

Compiling and Cross-Checking the Data

The data collected from the coroners' reports and police records were reviewed, discrepancies reconciled in return visits, and information entered onto the Data Collection Form. The accuracy of the data was evaluated by comparing my count of intimate femicide with coroners'

reports, police records, and newspaper reporting.

Interviewing Two Survivors of Attempted Intimate Femicide

The primary method of data collection for this portion of the study was that of intensive interviewing. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), intensive interviewing is an interpersonal interaction in which the researcher facilitates the participant's sharing of her experience in order to gain a deeper understanding of her world. The quality of the relationship between researcher and participant had a direct impact on the richness of the data that was collected.

While the statistical data previously collected provided much-needed information on the incidence of intimate femicide in Saskatchewan, I also wanted to provide a more personal understanding of intimate femicide. To this end, I asked each woman to describe, from her point of view, "how she perceived her relationship with her partner, how she viewed any actual or threatened violence, and what steps she took . . . to deal with her fears and the threats and acts of violence from her partner" (Crawford & Gartner, 1992, p.102). I asked each woman to look back on her experience and to reflect on who knew about the violence against her. I then asked her what kind of assistance could have prevented the attempt on her life. In addition, I asked each of them to reflect on how this experience had

affected her life in the years following the attempted femicide.

These stories are not necessarily representative of intimate femicide, nor are they meant to be; rather they reveal the nature of the women and the complexity of their experiences of relationship violence. From these accounts I drew themes and impressions. Their elucidated experiences gave me some insight into the prevention of intimate femicide.

While the interviews began with a specific set of questions (Appendix E), I made room for issues that arose in the course of the interviews. With the consent of the survivors (Appendix F), interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed. Interviews with each survivor were conducted in a location of her choosing. Anonymity of the participants was maintained in all transcriptions. Each interview was analyzed for themes and issues relevant to preventing intimate femicide.

Two interviews, approximately one month apart, were planned with each participant. During this time, each participant was to receive a copy of the transcript of her interview, check it for accuracy, and decide which themes she saw as central to preventing attempts on the lives of other women. I did not meet my one month deadline as neither woman was able to force herself to read the transcript to check it for accuracy. I allowed

more time to lapse, but the women remained unable to read their transcripts. Finally, second interviews were set up three and five months later with neither woman having read through her transcripts. Their second interviews were then based on their scanning of the transcripts, their recall of what they had said, and their subsequent thoughts on what elements were critical for preventing such attempts on the lives of other women.

Analyzing the Data

As two different methods of gathering data were employed it was essential to employ different methods of analysis. These methods of analysis are outlined in the section that follows.

Quantitative Data

Data gathered on the Coding Sheet were quantified, incidence of occurrence and characteristics were counted, and in some cases calculated per 100,000 women. Relationships within and between data on the coding sheets were also quantified.

Qualitative Data

Content Analysis of Two Case Studies.

Data from the intensive interviews were analyzed in two ways. First, I developed themes regarding prevention which emerged from the interviews themselves. These were developed and revised simultaneously with the conducting

of the interviews. In this way I was merging data collection and data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Essentially, qualitative content analysis "involves the simultaneous coding of raw data and constructing categories that capture relevant characteristics of the document's content" (Merriam, 1988, p. 117). In this case, the "document" was the transcript of the women's interviews.

Triangulation.

Second, themes elicited from the interviews were compared with themes which emerged from the femicide files. In this way, I made use of triangulation, comparing and contrasting data from a variety of sources and employing more than one research method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility.

In order to establish the credibility of the data, themes were checked with the participants and with peers who work with abused women to verify their importance and relevance from their perspective. In addition, I debriefed frequently with my advisor and occasionally with another committee member. I looked at the transcripts of the interviews as a narrative whole in an attempt to assess the progression of events and in order to maintain the "meaning in context" (Atkinson, 1992). Once again, this analysis was checked with and verified

by the participants and peer workers. Discrepancies were reconciled or made visible through my documentation of the discrepant issues/viewpoints. These activities helped to establish the credibility of the data.

Limitations

The purpose of this research was to learn about femicide and especially intimate femicide and its prevention. This goal was more or less accomplished but the learning was far from exhaustive or complete.

This study has a number of limitations. First of all, it was conducted from the perspective of a researcher of a particular socio-economic and cultural group (i.e., white, middle class) that is not representative of many of the victims; therefore, it may not adequately reflect the experiences of non-white or non-middle class victims.

A second limitation of the study has to do with the selection of the survivor-participants. Only two survivors of attempted intimate femicide were interviewed and neither was representative of the majority of victims--in terms of socio-economic class or cultural group. Both survivors are white, of European ancestry and of Protestant Christian heritage. They were living

in the upper-middle class at the time of their attempted murders.

A third limitation of the study is that both survivors were recalling events that happened 10 years earlier. Their reactions and opinions, as to what kinds of interventions might have been helpful to them, may have been dramatically different from their perceptions closer to the times of their near murders. In addition, changes in policies, procedures, and in the general understanding of intimate violence over the past ten years may have altered how these survivors would have been treated had these events occurred today.

A fourth limitation of this research had to do with the methodology itself. All data, from both survivors and femicide victims, were gathered by one researcher. This was necessitated by confidentiality and ethical agreements with the Department of Justice and survivor-participants. The use of one researcher is problematic as it relates to the review of the police files of femicides. The homicide files were themselves often incomplete. I was allowed to gather notes from the files but not to copy any parts of them; if I overlooked something in any file, there was no one else who would pick it up.

A fifth limitation of the research has to do with the source of the data on femicides. Most of this

information came from official sources such as police files and coroners' reports; these sources themselves reflect a particular bias in that their task is to determine the method of the killing and to gather evidence to assist in the conviction of the killer. Their primary goal is to re-construct the crime in order to solve it, not to reflect the perspective of the victim nor to look at possible preventability. Further, official sources also reflect the bias of a particular socio-economic and cultural group that is largely white, middle class, and male. This limitation could have been overcome to a certain extent by interviewing family members and others close to the victim of femicide, but that was beyond the scope of this research.

In spite of these limitations, this research contributes to the small body of information on femicide.

Ethical Concerns

The confidentiality and anonymity of the deceased women were strictly maintained. All available data about them were recorded on the Coding Sheet on which they were identified by number only. Further, no individual femicide victim is described in the document, and no identifying information is attached to a specific victim.

Ethical concerns regarding the two interview participants were addressed differently. Each

participant was assured that all of the information she revealed about herself would be kept confidential except for that which was central to the research and which she agreed to share. Her anonymity was guaranteed as much as possible, though this was difficult given the specifically identifying nature of the event she was describing. Because of these problems regarding confidentiality and anonymity, each participant had the final say about what information was included in the report. She was given a copy of her own interview transcripts and participated, as much as she was able, in the elimination of any identifying material. Each interviewee decided what name she wished to use for the final document and whether or not she wanted the information about her to reflect her identity.

As this research involved the recall of traumatic events in the lives of the participants that could result in emotional distress, Marcia Clark, Director of the Saskatoon Family Service Bureau, agreed to make counselling available to the participants at no cost to them.

Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time and without explanation. In fact, as their difficulty in reading through the transcripts became apparent, I checked with each participant as to whether her participation was too difficult to sustain,

and asked her if she had changed her mind and wished to withdraw from the research. In each case, the participants said they wanted to continue, and they felt their participation in this research was an important contribution if it could prevent even one experience like theirs.

The approval of the Ethics Committee of the University of Saskatchewan was obtained prior to conducting the research (Appendix G).

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE ANALYSES

This section includes data on the 40 known femicides in Saskatchewan from 1988-1992. This portion of the study was largely quantitative in nature and included information from newspaper searches and from a review of coroners' records and police reports .

Results of Newspaper Search

My newspaper search centered on The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon). I completed a newspaper search for all femicides from 1988 through 1992.

A number of interesting themes emerged from the newspaper search. These themes centred around the placement of femicides within The StarPhoenix, femicides not reported by the newspaper, differences in information between the Coroners' Branch and The StarPhoenix, and the general treatment of femicides. I will briefly discuss each of these themes in the following section.

Appallingly, femicides were not generally reported on the first page of the newspaper. Femicides were usually listed under local news, with small headlines, and with few lines used to describe what happened. I spoke with Associate Editor Wilf Popoff regarding The StarPhoenix policy involving the placement of domestic

homicides. According to Mr. Popoff, decisions on story placement "are based on what editors deem will be of interest to its readers and on other competing stories." Domestic homicides are regarded as "almost commonplace" and generally placed on page three or further back unless there is something unusual (e.g., the mayor killed his wife) or spectacular (e.g., it occurred in the Midtown Plaza) about the killing.

As I had not reviewed the pattern of reporting for all homicides, I also checked with Mr. Popoff on what basis homicides, in general, were reported on the front page to determine if there was a difference in reporting based on the gender of the homicide victim. According to Mr. Popoff, there probably were gender differences in reporting murders, but the desire of the newspaper was not to be sexist in the way that occurred. Stories of men killed in a bar fight on the west side would be placed similarly to domestic killings of women, as these types of killings are also regarded as "almost commonplace". However, murders committed by a person in the commission of another crime or in a public place were more likely to be reported on the front page (personal communication, Oct. 26, 1995).

Mr. Popoff stated that domestic homicides are also treated differently in that they are regarded as almost a "private matter" and the newspaper has a desire not to be

"voyeuristic" or intrusive in its coverage. Mr. Popoff went on to state, however, that if a woman were to murder her husband that would be more likely to be reported on the front page as husband murder is a more rare occurrence.

Although Saskatchewan recorded 40 femicides from 1988 to 1992 inclusive, only eleven were reported on the front page of The StarPhoenix. Three of these femicides were not discovered until 1994/5 and the women's identities and killers were initially unknown. Five of the eight remaining first-page reports of femicides initially appeared to be non-spousal or random killings. In six of the eleven front-page femicides there was a racial difference between victim and killer; however, three aboriginal women were killed by the same Caucasian killer. In seven of the eleven front-page femicides victim and killer did not appear to have known each other prior to the killing.

A second finding of the newspaper research revealed that some femicides were not reported in The StarPhoenix. Eight of the forty femicides were not reported by The StarPhoenix. A subsequent search of The LeaderPost (Regina) revealed that these same eight femicides were not reported in that newspaper either. All of these, except one, were femicides of aboriginal women--six of whom lived in rural areas, small towns, or reserves, one

of whom lived in an urban area. A third newspaper search revealed that two of these femicides were, however, reported in The Prince Albert Herald.

I asked The StarPhoenix Associate Editor, Wilf Popoff, about these unreported femicides. He stated that there are "no commercial reporting services" in many remote and reserve areas, and "the RCMP does not necessarily report to the press about reserve murders," although generally he believed they did. He stated that The StarPhoenix would generally report these homicides even if they were informed of them after a significant lapse of time as he believed they had an obligation to report all homicides in some fashion. He was puzzled about the absence of a report of the femicides of an aboriginal and a caucasian woman in an urban area and checked on what happened in those instances (personal communication, Oct. 26, 1995). While he was not an editorial staff member at the time of the femicides, he stated that, in his opinion, the non-reporting of the murders was an error on the part of the newspaper.

A third finding of the newspaper search revealed The StarPhoenix had reported some femicides not initially reported to me by the Coroners Branch. Follow-up contact, however, showed these missing femicides from the Coroners Branch did not come up on their computer search, but were documented as homicides in their files.

Based on the above three themes, a pattern of the treatment of femicides in The StarPhoenix emerged. Intimate femicides were not regarded as front page news unless there was an especially unusual or compelling element to them. Femicides involving unknown or non-intimate killers were more likely to be regarded as front page news; however, the vast majority of femicides were not reported on the front page. In addition, there were gender differences regarding which homicides were considered "commonplace" and, therefore, not worthy of front-page coverage. Men killed in west-side bar fights and women killed by intimate partners in their own homes were both considered commonplace homicides and unworthy of front-page coverage. Finally, killings not reported by the newspapers were more likely to be killings of aboriginal women.

What did I Learn About Femicide in Saskatchewan

The following is an analysis of the data of all femicides gathered from available sources including coroners' records, police reports, and newspaper searches. The categories I discuss are based on the information taken from the coding sheet for each femicide.

Forty-nine characteristics are listed on the coding sheets. Rarely, however, was information for each

characteristic available for each femicide. As each characteristic is discussed, the actual numbers of the available data are included so that my analysis accurately reflects the information. Usually, two characteristics are discussed under one heading as the same information was gathered on both victim and offender in most areas. Two items may also be discussed together for the sake of convenience.

Days of Week and Times of Day the Killings Occurred.

Where the day and time of the killings were established, the majority of the femicides occurred on a weekend (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday 23/35 or 65.7%) between midnight and 6 a.m. (19/33 or 57.6%).

TABLE 1**Days of Week Killings Occurred**

Day of week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	unknown	Tot al
Number of femicides	1	7	3	1	6	10	7	5	40

- *The 5 undetermined days of femicides occurred in the following time frames:
- 1 between 4:00 p.m. Wednesday & 8:00 p.m. Friday
 - 1 between 6:00 p.m. Friday & 6:00 a.m. Saturday (likely)
 - 3 between April and October 1992
 - 2 killings where day of femicides are unknown remain unsolved.

TABLE 2**Times of Day Killings Occurred**

Time of day	2400 - 0600	0601 - 1200	1201 - 1800	1801 - 2359	Time Undeter mined	Total
Number of femicides	19	3	3	8	7	40

Ages of Victims and Killers.

Femicide victims ranged in age from 15 to 78, with the greatest number of victims (12/40 or 30%) in the 26 to 30 year age category. Their killers ranged in age from 19 to 74 years with nearly two-thirds of the known killers (21/35 or 60%) falling under 35 years of age. However, only two (14%) non-intimate femicides were committed by men over 35 whereas twelve (52%) intimate femicides were committed by men over 35 years of age.

TABLE 3
Ages of Victims & Killer

Ages	Number of femicides per age group	Number of killers per age group
15 - 20	5	4
21 - 25	4	6
26 - 30	12	6
31 - 35	4	5
36 - 40	1	3
41 - 45	5	3
46 - 50	3	1
51 - 55	2	4
56 - 60	2	1
≥ 61	2	2
*Total	40	35

* Numbers differ as 3 killings remain unsolved and an additional 3 killings were committed by 1 individual

Relationship Status of Victims and Killers.

Eighteen victims and 16 killers were in married or common-law relationships. Fifteen of these killings were intimate femicides. Eight victims and six killers were separated. Six of these killings were intimate femicides. Ten victims and nine killers were single. None of these killings was an intimate femicide. Two victims and one killer were divorced. One of these killings was an intimate femicide. One victim and one killer were dating each other when he killed her.

TABLE 4**Relationship Status of Victims & Killers**

	Victims	Killers	Intimate femicides within category
Common-law	10	11	10
Married	8	5	5
Separated	8	6	6
Single	10	9	0
Divorced	2	1	1
Dating or Engaged	1	1	1
Unknown	1	4	0
TOTAL	40	37	23 / 37 solved murders of women were intimate femicides

Witnesses to Murders.

In 20 out of 40 (50%) femicides, there were witnesses who saw or heard the killings take place. Four of these killings involved five child witnesses who were too young to intervene, and three who were also assaulted by the killer. In the remaining 16 witnessed femicides, bystanders attempted to intervene in six of the femicides. Three of these bystanders were injured and one was killed. In four instances, the killing took place so quickly and unexpectedly that witnesses did not have time to intervene. In three instances, the killer had a gun and witnesses were not able to help. However, in five of the witnessed femicides, adult witnesses failed to report what they saw or heard to the police. In these

five femicides, the women were killed over the course of a prolonged violent assault that went on for hours and, in one case, a couple of days. The failure of these witnesses to call the police to stop the assault may have played a direct role in the killings of these women.

Fifteen of 20 witnessed femicides were killings of women by men with whom they had been intimate. Another two witnessed femicides, involved the killing of women who tried to intervene when someone they loved was assaulted by or assaulting their intimate partner. Therefore, all but three of the witnessed femicides were related to an assault between intimate partners.

TABLE 5
Witnessed Killings

**Code #	Witnessed Killing	Witness Actions
88-01	1 adult	-assisted & was stabbed (not fatal)
88-03	5 adults	-saw aftermath -called for help -assisted victim
88-04	2 adults	-1 helped & was killed -1 hid & called for help
89-10	20 adults & teens	-too quick, unable to assist -some called police -some chased killer
89-13	1 child	-watched in terror
90-15	1 adult	-injured by partner -ran for help

90-16	3-5 adults	-heard scream/thud -felt uncomfortable -left, did nothing
90-17	3 adults	-heard noise -did nothing -security guard called police
90-18	3 adults	-unable to assist -assailant had gun -called police
90-21	2 adults	-1 killed trying to stop woman from stabbing her CL *
90-26	2 children (3 & 5 years)	-asleep (?) during killing -assaulted & left in cold to die -not fatal
91-28	1 child (5 years)	-beaten & stabbed -not fatally
91-30	4 adults	-assailant had gun -called police
91-32	6 adults	-1 next door did nothing -3 across alley did nothing -2 in house also beaten/threatened
92-34	1 infant	-too young to help
92-35	3-5 adults	-too fast to help -ran for help
92-36	6-7 adults some children	-1 adult assaulted trying to help -feared for own safety & bolted doors against woman & assailant -no one called for help
92-37	7 adults	-tried to help but assailant began driving vehicle -went for help

92-38	6 adults	-pulled them apart -took her to hosp.
92-41	1 adult	-did nothing

* CL denotes common-law partner

**Please note: Each code # represents one witnessed murder.

- In 20/40 femicides witnesses were present during, just before, or just after the killings. 15 witnessed killings were intimate femicides, 5 were not. 2 witnessed non-intimate killings; however, involved the killing of a person who tried to intervene in a partner assault. In 1 instance the assailant was male and in another the assailant partner was female.

- Children (5 in total) of 4 women were present during the killings.

- The inaction of bystanders during 4 intimate femicidal assaults may have contributed directly to the deaths of 4 women. This constitutes 4 of 15 or 27% of witnessed intimate femicides.

Parental Status of Victims and Killers.

Twenty victims and nine (eight male, one female) perpetrators of femicide were known to have children. All eight male perpetrators with children committed intimate femicide. Equal numbers of victims and offenders were known to be childless.

TABLE 6
Parental Status of Victims & Offenders

	Children	No Children	Unknown
Victims	20	12	8
Offenders	9	13	16

* Totals differ because 1 offender killed 3 women.

Employment Status of Victims and Killers.

Employment status of both victim and killer was inconsistently recorded.

TABLE 7a
Employment Status of Victims & Killers

	Unemployed	Employed	Unknown	*Total
Killers	19	11	8	38
Victims	17	14	9	40

* Numbers differ as 3 killings were committed by 1 individual

Sometimes employment was recorded for either the victim or the killer but not for both. Twenty-one killings were committed by 19 unemployed males compared to 11 killings by 11 employed males. Fourteen employed and 17 women not employed outside the home were murdered. Ten women not employed outside the home were killed in intimate femicides compared to six employed women; however, for seven women murdered by intimates, employment status was not known or not recorded. Employment status was unknown or not recorded for only four intimate killers.

TABLE 7b
Relationship between killings & employment status of
victims & killers+

	Employed Victim	Unemployed Victim	Totals
* Unemployed killer	** 9	***12	21
Employed killer	4	4	8
Totals	13	16	29

* Retired persons included in category of unemployed.

** Includes employed victim/retired killer.

*** Includes retired victim/unemployed killer and retired victim/retired killer.

+ 3 women killed by the same killer are included as separate victim-offender pairs. All were listed in police records as killings by a stranger.

Information on employment status was available for 29/40 victim offender pairs.

Race of Victims and Killers.

Twenty-three of the killings of women were committed by same race killers; however, aboriginal women and men were disproportionately represented as both victims and killers. Twenty-four of the femicide victims were of aboriginal ancestry; 16 were Caucasian. Sixteen of the killers were of aboriginal ancestry, 16 were Caucasian, two were of other racial origins, and in four cases, the race of the killer was unknown or not recorded.

Approximately 38% (9/24) of aboriginal women and 25% (4/16) of Caucasian women were murdered by men of another race.

TABLE 8

Race of Victims & Killers

	Caucasia Killer	Aborig- inal Killer	Other Race Killer	Unknown Race	Total
Aborig- inal Victims	8 vic- tims & 6 killers	13	1	2	24*
Caucasia Victim	10	3	1	2	16**
Totals	***16	16	2	4	38/40

* 1 killing of an aboriginal woman was still unsolved and the race of her killer was unknown. For another aboriginal woman-killing, the race of her killer was not recorded.

** 2 killings of Caucasian women were still unsolved and the race of their killers was unknown.

*** Numbers differ as 3 aboriginal women were killed by the same Caucasian male.

Criminal Record of Victims and Killers.

Most of the killers had a criminal record prior to their committal of femicide (27/35 or 77%). Fourteen of 40 (35%) victims were noted as having a criminal record; however, this information was recorded in only 31 of 40 femicides.

TABLE 9
Criminal Record of Victims & Killers

	Criminal Record	No Criminal Record	Unknown
Killers	27	6	4
Victims	14	17	9

Alcohol/Drug Use by Victims and Killers.

Alcohol/drug use was a feature in many of the killings for both victim and killer. Eighteen victims (45%) had used alcohol, 16 (40%) had not used alcohol, and in six cases (15%) alcohol use was unknown at the time of the murders. Twenty-six of 35 (74%) killers had used alcohol at the time they killed, five (14%) had not used alcohol and for seven of 38 killers (19%) alcohol/drug use was unknown or not recorded.

TABLE 10
Drug/Alcohol Use in Crime

Drug/Alcohol Use	Yes	No	Unknown
Killers	26	5	7
Victims	18	16	6

Relationship Between Victim and Killer.

Twenty-three of 37 (62.2%) solved femicides were intimate femicides. Of these killings, ten were by male common-law partners, five were by married men, six were by separated men, one was by a divorced man, and one by

an engaged man. Seven non-intimate femicides were committed by seven single males. Two of the non-intimate killers were females and in both cases they killed a woman who was their friend. One of these women killed her friend when her friend tried to stop her from stabbing her common-law husband. Another woman killed her friend after her friend tried to convince her to have sex with a "bad" john. In this case a "bad" john was a john who was known to hurt prostitutes.

TABLE 11

***Victim-Offender Relationship**

V-O RELATIONSHIP	Number in each category
Common-Law Spouses	10
Married Spouses	5
Separated Intimates	6
Divorced Intimates	1
Dating Relationship	1
Acquaintances	4
Friends	2
Relatives	1
Strangers	6
Prostitute/john	1
Unknown	3

*Included as separate victim-offender pairs are 3 women killed by the same man.

Suicides.

Five killers committed suicide. All were Caucasian males and all committed intimate femicide. One

aboriginal killer committed intimate femicide and attempted suicide but was not successful in killing himself.

History of Prior Violence by Victims and Killers.

Prior violence by the victim was recorded so infrequently (3/40 victims) as to make analysis of this data meaningless. There was known prior violence by the killer in 28 of 37 (76%) offender records. Among intimate femicides, 15 of 23 (65%) killers were known to have committed previous violence against the women they killed. Two additional intimate femicide killers were known to have committed violence against someone other than their partner. Among non-intimate femicides, there was a history of prior violence for eleven of fourteen (78%) killers.

Table 12
Prior History of Violence by Offender*

Known Prior Violence by Offender	Numbers
To any one in all solved killings	28/37
To victim of intimate femicide	15/23
To anyone where killing was an intimate femicide	17/23
To anyone where killing was a non-intimate femicide	**11/14

* Prior history of violence by victim was not recorded consistently enough for meaningful analysis.

** The 3 unsolved femicides are classified as non-intimate femicides based on available information but are not included in these figures as offender is unknown

There had been prior threats of violence against another person by 18 of 37 (49%) offenders in all solved killings; however, there had been prior threats of violence by the offender to the victim in 15 of 23 (65%) intimate femicides and in none of 14 solved non-intimate femicides.

Table 12a

Prior History of Threats of Violence by Offender*

Known prior threats of violence by offender to anyone in all killings	18/38
Known prior threats of violence by offender to victim in intimate femicides	15/23

* Again, questions about threats of violence by the victim were not recorded or were not asked, so meaningful analysis was not possible.

Prior Police Involvement.

There had been prior police involvement regarding violence in the relationship in 10 of 23 (43%) intimate femicides and in none of the non-intimate femicides. In at least one case of police involvement, the officer was involved more in a counselling role and was not aware of any tendency towards violence on the part of the killer. The man had presented to the officer as a quiet man seeking to understand his legal rights since separating.

Table 13
Prior Police Involvement in Relationship in Which Killing Occurred

Type of Femicide	Number
Prior Police Involvement in Intimate Femicide	10/23
Prior Police Involvement in Non-Intimate Femicide	0/17

Geographic Location.

Seventeen killings (42.5%) took place in an urban area (defined as those with a municipal police force), eight (20%) in towns or villages, eight (20%) on reserves, and seven (17.5%) in rural areas.

TABLE 14
Geographic Location of Killings

Geographical location	Number of killings
City (those with municipal police)	17
Town/village	8
Reserve	8
Rural	7

Location of the Crime.

Intimate femicides most often took place in the joint home of the victim and the offender (39%), followed by out-of-doors (17%), the victim's home (13%), and the offender's home (13%). The outdoor murders took place in a sports ground, a public park, a grid road, and the streets of a reserve. Four killings (17%) took place in

other locations such as a vehicle, a friend's living room, a motel room, and victim's workplace. For non-intimate femicides, the most common locale was outdoors.

Table 15

Specific Location of Killings

Femicide Type	V's Home	O's Home	V-O Home	Out doors	Other Locale	Totals
IFs	3	3	9	4	4	23
Non-IFs	3	1	0	7	6	17
Totals	6	4	9	11	10	40

Method of killings.

Stabbing was the most common method of killing (18/40 or 45%). This was followed in frequency by beatings (10/40 or 25%), strangulation (5/40 or 12.5%), firearms (5/40 or 12.5%), axe (1/40 or 2.5%), and vehicle (1/40 or 2.5%).

TABLE 16
Methods of Killing

Method of Killings	Number
Stabbing	18
Beating	10
Firearms	5
Strangulation	5
Axe	1
Vehicle	1

The frequency of use of each method of killing varied depending on whether it was an intimate or non-intimate femicide. Amongst non-intimate femicides, 12/17 (70.6%) were stabbed, 3/17 (17.6%) were strangled, and 2/17 (11.8%) were beaten. Amongst intimate femicides, 8/23 (34.8%) were beaten, 6/23 (26.1%) were stabbed, 5/23 (21.7%) were killed with a firearm, 2/23 (8.7%) were strangled, 1/23 (4.3%) was killed with an axe, and 1/23 (4.3%) was run over with a vehicle.

Multiple Methods or Overkill.

Multiple methods or overkill were present in 20 of 40 (50%) of the femicides. Intimate femicides, however, had a disproportionate number of killings in which overkill was present (15/23 or 65%) compared to non-intimate killings (5/17 or 29%).

Table 17
Presence of Overkill

Type of Femicide	Presence of Overkill/Multiple Methods
Intimate Femicide	15/23
Non-Intimate Femicide	5/17
Total Femicides	20/40

Motives for Killings.

Motives cited in police records for the killings varied sharply depending on whether it was an intimate or

non-intimate femicide. Of the non-intimate femicides the motive most commonly cited was "sex crime." Other motives were that her friend stole his booze, that a woman tried to stop her friend from stabbing her friend's common-law husband and was stabbed instead, that she told her niece not to marry him, that she tried to get her friend to have sex with a "john," and that he was insane. In five non-intimate femicides no motive was cited; three of these were unsolved.

Among intimate femicides, eight of 23 motives cited in police records had to do with separation issues. These motives were worded as his fear of her leaving him, his inability to accept the separation, or his refusal to "share" property or custody with her. An additional eight motives were cited in police records as an argument, but actually had to do with her refusing to comply with his wishes in some way. Three simply cited the motive as a "drunken beating" with little information as to the precipitating events. One motive had to do with a man mistaking the woman he was dating and with whom he was becoming sexual for a man in drag, as she was very flat-chested; one motive was listed as insanity, one as his intent to take her with him when he committed suicide, and one motive was unknown.

In some instances, I interpreted motives differently than the homicide file. For example, when the homicide

file simply listed "drunken beating" as the motive, I looked for any references as to when he began his violence. Two of these references were "she told him she didn't want sex" and "she made a comment he didn't like." I classified these killings among the eight who refused to comply with his wishes in some way. Another difference in interpretation of motive had to do with a man who was suicidal. He decided to kill himself and to take his wife with him. Police records listed the motive as "argument"; however, some witnesses stated that in the months preceding the intimate femicide, the killer had said that he was going to kill himself and take her with him because he could not bear to be without her.

Number of Victims.

In addition to the 40 femicides, there were 17 other victims involved in the murders. Five of these victims were killers who committed suicide after they murdered an intimate partner. One victim-killer attempted suicide but survived. One other victim died--the current lover of a woman killed by her ex-husband. All other victims were assaulted or threatened during the femicidal assault. Two victims, male relatives of the killer, were assaulted when they tried to intervene in a spousal assault. Three victims were pre-school children who both witnessed the killings and were assaulted by the killers. Two victims were mutual friends of the killer and his

common-law wife. They were assaulted trying to intervene in an assault against her. Finally, one adult male was assaulted while employed by the woman's lawyer to assist her in gaining possession of property awarded her in court.

Only two victims were assaulted in the course of a non-intimate femicide. One victim, who survived, was an intimate partner of the killer. Her fiance killed the woman who tried to protect her as he was assaulting her. Another victim was the husband of a woman who was killed during a break-and-enter that was also a sex crime.

Sexualized Elements Within Killings.

Seven women (41%) killed by non-intimates were known to be sexually assaulted while only four women (17%) killed by intimates were known to be sexually assaulted. There was no known sexual assault in eight of the non-intimate femicides (47%), and in fourteen of the intimate femicides (61%). There was nudity or exposure of the bodies of the women in five intimate femicides (22%) and in only two of the non-intimate femicides (12%). The above categories are mutually exclusive.

Table 18
Femicides Involving Sexual Assault

Femicide Type	Sexual Assault	Nudity/Exposure No Sexual Assault	No Sexual Assault	Totals
Non-IF	7	2	8	17
IF	4	5	14	23
Totals	11	7	22	40

Charges and Outcomes of Charges Laid.

First-degree murder charges were filed in 16 of 37 (43%) solved femicides, but in only six femicides was a first degree murder conviction obtained (16%). Of these four were non-intimate femicides and two were intimate femicides. Fifteen of 37 charges of second degree murder were filed (40.5%) with six second degree murder convictions obtained (16%). Five of these convictions were for non-intimate femicide, and only one was for an intimate femicide. One charge of manslaughter was filed (3%); however, 15 convictions of manslaughter were obtained (40.5%). Of these convictions, two were for non-intimate femicides and 13 were for intimate femicides. One acquittal, one conviction of dangerous driving causing death, one dismissal of charges (killing ruled accidental), and two not guilty by virtue of insanity verdicts were obtained. In instances where the killer committed suicide, no convictions were obtained. Three femicides remain unsolved.

Table 19
Charges & Outcomes of Charges

Categories of Charges Laid & Final Outcomes	# of Charges in Each Category	# of Convictions & Other Outcomes
1st Degree Murder	16	6
2nd Degree Murder	15	6
Manslaughter	1	15
Suicide Clearance	5	5
Acquitted		1
Not Guilty/Insanity		2
Dangerous Driving Causing Death		1
Charges Dismissed		1

Summary of Data on all Femicides

These data underlined similarities and differences between intimate and non-intimate femicides.

Women in common-law relationships were more likely to be killed by intimate partners than separated or married women. Their own homes were the most likely place women would be killed by intimate partners. The motives for these killings were usually related to a man's inability to deal with his partner's actual or feared separation from him or to disruption of the man's dominance in the relationship. There were more likely to be witnesses and other victims in intimate femicides. Suicide by the killer was strictly a feature of intimate femicide committed by white men and was unheard of in the non-intimate killings in this study. The killer was

known to have been violent to the victim before in nearly two-thirds of intimate femicides, and there had been previous police involvement in almost half the murders. Overkill/multiple methods occurred more often when the murder was an intimate femicide. Women of all ages were equally at risk for intimate femicide. Intimate femicide was committed by men of all ages.

Stabbing and beating were the most common methods of murdering all women; however, men who used firearms to kill women used them exclusively to kill intimate partners. Most killers had criminal records and had used alcohol or drugs at the time they committed the murders. Men who killed wives, girlfriends, or lovers were usually convicted of manslaughter (13/23-57%), whereas men who killed women not intimate to them were more often convicted of second-degree murder (9/17-53%).

Single women were more likely to be killed outdoors by strangers; the killings were more likely to be sexually motivated and to involve sexual assault of the victim. Young women were more likely to be victims of non-intimate femicide committed by men under 35.

There were also some differences between the murders of white women and aboriginal women. Aboriginal women were killed at a higher rate than white women (24 to 16) yet make up only 15% of the population. They were as likely to be killed in a non-intimate as an intimate

femicide (11 to 12), while white women were killed predominantly through intimate femicide (11 of 16 or 69%). Further, their killings were less likely to be reported in The StarPhoenix. Seven aboriginal woman killings were not reported compared to one white woman killed and not reported.

Results of Research on Prevention

Prevention of femicide was looked at within the femicidal incident itself and in terms of the context preceding the femicidal incident.

The most information available was that recorded in police reports regarding the femicidal incident itself. There was very little information regarding context available or recorded. For example, occurrence reports of previous police contacts were often not listed; interviews with families or others who could give evidence about a history of prior violence between intimate couples were also rarely available. Criminal record information was recorded very briefly or not at all.

Prevention Within the Femicidal Incident

In nine of 23 (39%) intimate femicides and in one non-intimate femicide, I classified the femicide as possibly preventable within the incident itself. I will briefly discuss each of these incidents as circumstances

varied widely in each situation.

1. Two times in the same night, one victim of intimate femicide told two different cab drivers that she thought her common-law partner was going to kill her that night. One cab driver offered to take her to the police station but she refused; the other cab driver thought "it was just the booze talking." Neither driver registered his information with the police prior to the killing.
2. At least three and possibly more residents of the apartment block in which the victim lived heard the sounds of an assault that continued for hours. One person knocked on the door and complained of the noise, but the assault continued. Another person became so upset at the sounds of the assault that she left the apartment building and did not return for many hours. Some witnesses heard him threatening to kill her, her screams for help, and the sounds of her body hitting the floor and wall. No one called the police.
3. A woman had had a previous relationship with a man who was under mandatory supervision for manslaughter. He was granted full parole in June of 1984. In August of 1984, she anonymously requested that his parole be revoked as she was afraid of him, but there is no indication that anything came from

her request. She was too afraid of him to stand up to him and to ask him to leave. She had been severely assaulted by him on many occasions and, on more than one occasion, choked to unconsciousness. In the assault that ended her life in 1988, again there were auditory witnesses to the assault who failed to call the police in time for her life to be saved.

4. A woman was shot by her ex-husband in a small Saskatchewan community after an urban police force failed to quickly relay an order to arrest her husband because of his threats to kill her. He was detained by the RCMP, the Criminal Police Information Centre (CPIC) on him was checked, and then he was released as the arresting officer found no record of an order that he be arrested. This occurred five days before her murder. In this instance, police error appeared to play a large role. On June 9 the woman submitted a statement regarding the threats against her, turned over a tape on which he threatened to kill her, and described a plan he had to kill her that was thwarted by other events. Police planned to arrest him and to confiscate his guns but could not locate him and the children who had been abducted. According to a June 10 urban police entry, the

police sent a dispatch to the local RCMP advising them to arrest and hold the woman's husband. RCMP were also informed that a warrant would be issued as soon as possible. According to a June 11 urban police entry, the woman's husband was on their system and a warrant had been issued for his arrest. This was inconsistent with information from the rural community. On June 14 two errors were committed. Earlier in the day, the husband turned her children over to the RCMP detachment and an officer of the Department of Social Services. He was given a July date to attend court and allowed to go free. His guns were not confiscated; he was not held for psychiatric evaluation. Later that same day her husband was spotted by another RCMP officer. Because the officer heard the man was wanted by an urban police force he ran a CPIC check on him; however, the check did not indicate that the man was wanted by anyone. The officer did not pick him up. A copy of the tape containing the threats against her and information on charges of abduction arrived June 15, the next day.

Meanwhile, the woman was informed by the Department of Social Services that her children were in their care and she made arrangements to get them on June 20. Neither she nor Social Services

informed the police or the RCMP that she was going to get her children. She was killed by her ex-husband the day she went to pick up her children.

5. An RCMP officer accompanied a woman to her farm home to retrieve some property after the completion of the divorce and property settlement. At the victim's request the officer remained at the end of the driveway. The officer made a phone call and turned the car around. His windows were closed and he failed to hear the four gunshots that the woman's estranged husband used to kill her and then himself.
6. Three individuals across the alley from the home in which one woman was killed saw what appeared to be a man having sex with a woman who was unconscious or dead. Because they weren't certain it was an assault, they decided it was none of their business and did not report the incident to the police. The woman was brutally assaulted and tortured over two days and, unbeknownst to them, was still alive when they saw her. Their call to police could have saved her life. Another neighbour heard what sounded like a fight coming from the house but also did not call police.
7. An elderly man, who by all accounts had never before been violent, began to have sudden and alarming thoughts of violence which he reported to a

psychiatrist whom he saw three times over a six-week period. The psychiatrist did not take his fears seriously enough and he ended up killing his wife.

8. In the year prior to the killing, a man attempted suicide twice, repeatedly spoke of suicide, and on a number of different occasions said he would like to kill himself but that he would kill his wife too, because he loved her and did not want to be without her in the afterlife. He had stated this about three times at the house party at which he later killed her. He had talked about murder/suicide before and not done anything, so people did not take him seriously and did not call police.
9. At least seven or more people on a reserve saw a woman being severely assaulted by her husband over a period of hours. One man tried to intervene but was also assaulted. The other members of the community who witnessed the assault were too afraid of reprisals from the assaulting man's family to either take her in or to call police.
10. Members of a religious community became aware that one of their members was experiencing increasing paranoia that his food was being poisoned, that people were following him and spraying poisons on him. They referred him for treatment but he refused

medication because he believed the pharmacist was poisoning his medication. Meanwhile the man was picked up by police twice for knocking on peoples' doors at night and taken to hospital for a psychiatric evaluation. Even though he was found in the X-ray room of the hospital with a knife, he was released. Three days before he murdered a woman, two members of the religious community to which he belonged (one a psychiatrist) had an argument over whether or not to certify him. The psychiatrist felt they should wait it out and made plans for the man to be returned to his home the next Saturday. On Friday, he murdered a woman who touched his food in a grocery store.

While no one can say with certainty that changing the actions of the individuals in the 10 incidents mentioned above would have changed the outcome, it is clear to me that their responses left a lot to be desired.

Summary

Six of these murders took place, in part, because members of the communities in which the women lived failed to report the violence against them to the police. Members of the community failed to report a woman's expressed fears that her partner would kill her. They

failed to report auditory and visual evidence that an assault was in progress. Failures by the community may have been contributing factors in the deaths of six women.

Four killings may have been the result of the failure of the judicial system. One woman was needlessly murdered by her intimate partner when communication between two police forces failed to quickly and clearly relay instructions to arrest, detain, and charge her estranged husband. Another woman was killed when the police officer, who accompanied her to the marital home, failed to keep her within earshot and eyesight even though he was with her specifically to prevent an assault. In at least two intimate femicides, the women and the communities in which they lived did not believe the judicial system could keep them safe. In one instance, the woman had asked the Parole Board for protection from a man who had previously committed manslaughter, but there was no indication that the Parole Board responded. In another instance, the killer and his family terrorized the entire community and they did not report the fatal assault to the police for four days. In both of these killings, the women experienced the dual failure of their communities and an arm of the judicial system.

One intimate and one non-intimate femicide can be

attributed to the failure of the medical community to accurately assess the dangerousness of the killer. Both killers reported severe psychiatric symptoms. One reported recurring persistent thoughts of violence and asked his doctor to stop him before he hurt someone; the other reported extreme paranoia and doctors had verified previous violence by him when he was in this mental state. Both times doctors made decisions allowing the killers to continue living in the community.

Of 10 preventable killings, nine were intimate femicides. How is it that what happens in the family is deemed by society to be a private affair--to the extent that individuals fail to intervene when an event, as serious as an assault, occurs?

CHAPTER FOUR

TWO WOMEN'S STORIES

In this chapter, I have chosen to include edited versions of the stories of two women who survived an attempted intimate femicide. These stories are told in the voices of the women using their own words. I have chosen to tell their stories in this manner as, by using their own words, others can see the women's lives through their eyes. It also elucidates, in a way that I could not, the experience of surviving an attempted intimate femicide. Further, I recognize that my perspective does not encompass all the possible analyses of these women's stories, and other equally important analyses may arise from others' readings. Both women chose to use pseudonyms for themselves and for all individuals mentioned in their stories. The stories have been altered in other minor ways to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

Rena's Story

We were just in the process of separating. I had bought another house, had been cleaning carpets, and had gone over to see if they were dry. I had a real inner gut feeling that I shouldn't be there by myself, so I left and went to a good friend's house at about 8:30 in

the morning. They invited me to have breakfast with them. I wasn't there very long when we saw my husband, Mark, pull up on the wrong side of the street and he was going fairly fast. He jumped out of the truck and came to the door. I knew by the way that he was approaching that he was very upset, but I did not anticipate what happened next. He came through the door and grabbed me. He didn't knock, he just came right through the door and grabbed me. The people who were there didn't have a chance to do anything. He threw me a full length of the living room, which would be about 15 feet. I hit a wall, and with that he left.

I knew I had been quite badly hurt. They took me to the hospital. I had dislocated my shoulder and there had been a lot of damage to my neck. I guess at the time you want to be oblivious to the fact that they really intended to kill you. As I look back now, I think you become as sick in your thinking as they are. And, I still, in my head, really not believe that that's what he had tried to do. My friends were appalled. They said, "You know, Mark tried to kill you." I said, "I don't know"--but that really was his intent. He didn't succeed. If I had stayed over at the other house I probably wouldn't be here today. It's just that he had to lower his level of anger because there were people there.

If I hadn't listened to my instinct--and I have a hard time listening to that--I really believe I wouldn't be here. So, I'm pretty thankful.

That was eight years ago. It was November, 1986; it was winter. This time of year used to be hard for me. I think I've gone through a lot of healing over it. At first I thought it was my fault, and I felt that I had caused it. I don't look at it like that any more. Today I'm really thankful I'm here, and I had a purpose to raise my kids. Rather than just dwell on the negative part of that--what I lived in--I'm thankful for where I am today.

I was married to him for 15 years. There was violence all the way along--more verbal abuse but there was physical abuse, too. But, you know, I think you become sick in your thinking as well. Every time it would happen I thought, "Well, I must have caused it. I aggravated him." I don't believe that now, but I did then, and I only saw it when I got out of it. I didn't see it when I was in it. Today I understand people saying, "Why would they keep going back to their mate?"

We had a short separation five years before the final separation. There were lots of times along the way I knew I should have been out of it--but this commitment to the marriage--you're a failure if you left--all the things that society and you put on yourself--so you stay.

Within five years of being married the physical abuse began. The verbal abuse started within the first year--probably within the first month. At first you think, well, that's part of melding two lives together. You're both individuals, and all of the sudden you have to share. So you think that's a part of it. We train ourselves to do a job but we don't train people to go into marriage. Really that's sad.

I didn't think I believed in a fairy-tale type thing, but I was raised in a very good home. I didn't see violence and I thought my home would be the same. There's no guarantees on that.

The verbal abuse would be very belittling. He was always running you down and when you get that enough you believe that you're not a very good person. So, you don't really have great self-esteem, and then, with him you never measured up, no matter what you did. So you're always trying to do better. There's a limit where you can't do anymore, but I thought if I just did this one more thing or did something better he would quit hurting me. I'm a totally different person today than I was then because, in lots of ways, I was his slave.

I don't know if I can recall which would be the first assault. I can remember him becoming so angry with what you would say, that he would pick you up and throw you or push you down, and I think alcohol played a large

part in it as well. I didn't know that he was doing all this drinking because he's a very behind-the-scene person and his job always took him away. He did weekend binges and then he would come home and be this person that I didn't know. For a long time I really didn't know what was happening. It sounds crazy, but I really see how people are blind to a lot of things.

I think his violent behaviour was very consistent. He didn't really get worse in the physical abuse. It was just the same kinds of things. I remember one time, I thought he had broken my hip. It was all black and blue--it wasn't broken--but it was bad enough. I never should have been there. I never told anyone that, because you felt ashamed--why is this happening in your home and I didn't really know where to go. You know, who do you tell? We lived in a small town. I guess social services would have had somebody, but you knew everybody. It wasn't where you wanted to go and say, "This is what's happening in my home", because I thought they would think that you must have caused it. You're getting enough abuse at home, you don't want to go to a counsellor where they're going to tell you that you're doing more wrong, so you just want to keep it quiet.

The last five years of my marriage I knew that this was not normal. This was not okay. But I still felt there must be some things we could do to try to make it

work. By the time I said this is enough, I didn't feel there was anything more I could do. And so I left with no guilt that I should have tried this and this. I left thinking, "You are really stupid. You should have been out of there. Why, there's no more you can do. Now, you've got to stand up for your kids and for you, no matter what it takes." I would have done anything to stay out of that situation for my children especially. I wonder where I'd be if I hadn't had that strong mother instinct to protect my children.

After 10 years I went for some counselling in the city. Just before we split up, I asked Mark to go for counselling with me. You can take a horse to water, but you can't make them drink it. And that's exactly what he did, he was there, but that was it. Finally, it took the counsellor saying, "He doesn't want to change. You have to face some of this." That was good, when I finally could trust a counsellor and they could say to me, "You know, this is where it's at." By the time we separated, I was at a place where I did want to know what was wrong with me.

I had a really good friend who was a doctor of psychology in the States and he was coming to Saskatoon quite a few times. I said, "Allan, do every test there is to do on me. I want to know what kind of person I am. I want to change." That was when I really found out that

it wasn't all me. Then I could start to work on me and forget about trying to help Mark get better.

The only ones who would have known about the violence during the years that we were together were the kids. When we separated after 15 years, that was the first that anybody else knew.

I can remember him grabbing me. We had gone to a convention and I had to put on a bathing suit, and my arms were all black and blue. I remember people asking me what had happened. I'd say, "Well, jeez, I don't know. I bruise really easy." What a lie! And you did, you lived a lie. I think that's the most horrible thing when people are in this--that you live a lie. You absolutely live in bondage because you're phoney. You're not the person that you really are.

What hurts me, more than anything today, is that at the time I didn't realize what it was doing to my kids. You think that it's going on in your bedroom behind a door. They hear what's going on, but in your head, you don't give children enough credit. And I know now, that they would lay in bed, and cry, and be scared, and talk to each other. They didn't know what to do, and didn't know whether to talk to either one of us, and always lived in the fear of when would be the next time. They were 11 or 12 then. As much as my pain was great, so was theirs, and that's probably harder for me to deal with.

For some reason you can deal with your own hurt more than you can with what you've done to your children, because that has affected their lives.

Even after the separation only really close friends, my mom and dad, the counsellor knew about the violence. That would be it. And then his violence became quite apparent too, because he was ready to beat my dad up and was very verbally abusive to my mom. A lot of those behaviours became evident, especially to my mom and dad, and a couple of close friends.

In that final assault, he dislocated my arm and did a lot of damage to the neck. I still have lots of trouble with it, all the time. I get a lot of headaches from it, I have to go for a fair bit of either physio or massage therapy.

When the kids came home from school, I had the sling on and a neck brace and all these things. They called their dad and said, "Why did you do that?" He very openly admitted to them, "I really had intended to kill her so be thankful she's here." And that really sealed it. This wasn't just my friends feeling sorry for me or making something bigger than it was; this was for real. Then I knew that this was over, sealed, even though there's always emotions still tied. That point really severed it--that no matter how many times I cried, or he called, I was not going back. And he wasn't coming back.

Then he didn't any longer physically abuse me, but he broke into our house all the time. So we had to look for those things.

And it continues, and that's why I had to heal myself or I couldn't cope today. He will still stalk me and he will stalk the kids. He never lets go of anything he ever had, although he doesn't want it--this is how I perceive it. He would like control, and when he loses control he wants to gain it back somehow.

The police took a statement at the time. Today I don't have a lot of respect for the police force in these kinds of issues because they say, "Well, it's a marital thing and we don't get involved." I remember saying to them, "You have to be dead and then something will be done and that's too late." I remember one RCMP officer saying, "Yeah that's nearly what has to happen." If I was in a real marital dispute, I probably would call a friend before the police. I understand their reluctance to get involved to a degree because a lot of times the police intervene and want to lay charges and whoever is abused will say, "No, no, no." So, I mean, it's a two-way thing, but I know for me I really felt that there wasn't the support from the police that there should have been. I thought they should have been harder. They put a restraining order on Mark, but he still comes around. It seemed like he got a hundred chances, and he probably

didn't, but it seemed like they should have stopped him sooner.

Hearing their father say he intended to kill me affected the kids a lot. They've gone for counselling and, I think, will continue to have to. I don't think their hurts are healed. To this day, they don't really have a relationship with him. Not just because of that, but he wasn't capable, at that time, of building a relationship and pushed them away to the point that they just said, "We're not willing to risk this any more."

One of them got married recently and my ex came to the wedding. Uninvited, but he was okay. He likes to come to functions when he's recognized or something special. After we separated you didn't always know what his behaviour would be, but he was okay. He just came quietly and left quietly. It didn't bother me that he was there, but I was afraid of how it would affect Shannon. When I saw that she was okay, then it was okay for me.

The attack on my life did make me search out help and become much more open to saying honestly what I feel, and where things are at. I would never pretend, ever again. It made me become a really real person. I think I'm much more compassionate to people. At one time I had a lot of really pat answers to life. Life hadn't been very hard for me, and I look at things very differently

now. If I speak from my spiritual part of my life, I believe that morning that God spoke to me to leave, and I did. Why I acted on it, I don't know. But I do think from the spiritual side that, the Lord knew my heart, and knew that I really wanted to raise my children, and I got that chance. I don't understand it. I'm sure there are hundreds of other people who have that same intent, and I almost feel guilty because I happened to be spared. If I had not gone to my friends' house, I don't believe that I would be here, because then there would have been no bars held and he would have just done whatever he felt like doing.

A lot of details aren't there and that is probably my coping mechanism kicking in--I've learnt that I don't keep a record of all the wrongs done to me. At one time I did, and I guess that's another positive thing. I don't need to keep a record of everything anymore. I can just let it go.

When I think about what has happened since I left him and have been on my own, I remember wise advice from this doctor saying, "I want you to make a promise to me, that you'll have no relationship with anybody for two years." At the time I thought he was crazy. Although I knew he was educated and I should believe him, I thought he was crazy, and I remember saying to him, "Allan, I'll be fine in six months". He said, "You won't be". He

said, "You will go through the motion of living the first year, and the second year you'll start to live, and the third year you're going to be you". I thought he was nuts, but I respected him so I said, "Okay, I'll make that commitment to you." Once I make a commitment to somebody, I very seldom break that, and every time I would think about it I'd say, "No, I promised".

It was the best thing he ever did. I think it is so important for a counsellor to build such a trust and such a respect in who they're counselling that they will believe them. If I had not believed him, I don't think I would be where I am today. It took me that long to find out who I was. If I'd not found out who I was, I would probably be back into the worst relationship you could imagine--and I would have never found out who I am. Although you go back into relationships, they're not perfect. I'm remarried and our marriage has not been perfect, but I will not allow somebody to do what Mark did to me. If they would want to then I wouldn't be there, and I wouldn't carry guilt--and I would not be non-vocal about it. It really has changed me that I can have a healthier relationship with someone instead of being a door mat. I have enough respect for me now that I would not allow somebody to do that again.

I think a lot of times our Christianity puts it on you that you should be a certain kind of person and that

makes you vulnerable to abuse. I think I'm a different Christian today than I was back then. I had all the right answers. I didn't really, though, have it in my heart. I was told, "You're to be submissive to your mate." However you learned that, whether it be in your home or through the church, I thought I had to please him. Although at home, my parents' relationship was great, my relationship with my sister was not great. I was never accepted and so I'm sure that I had a desire to be accepted. So you become a pleaser, and sometimes being a pleaser you become a door mat. I don't know if that makes sense, but you carry it too far. I mean, being submissive doesn't mean that somebody can destroy you as a person but I thought that it did. I would have to say that my home probably played a part, and also my faith played a part in that. I think a generation back there was a totally different perception of what women were to be on the spiritual side of it.

I don't think that the church has a clue how to deal with violence. Yes, I do go to church, but I believe that there's so much more to Christianity than just going to church and saying all the right things and doing all the right things. I think a big percentage of Christians do not know how to deal with the real world and the violence in it.

Talking about this brings back lots of emotion. A part of me says "Wow! I can talk about this and I'm not in chunks." So there's a part of me that says, "Man, you've come a long way"--but then there's the other side of you that knows that it really has affected you a lot. Probably the biggest thing that I have to work through is that I wish I'd gotten out of it more quickly for my children's sake. I was under the falsehood that you stay together for your children; that was the big thing. That is garbage! You don't stay together for your children because they are better off without the violence. That's what I learned through counselling. The violence that your children see affects them and it's better to break up than to keep exposing them to that. You don't want that behaviour in your children. You don't want those same things carried on generation after generation. And yet if they see that in you, that you accept it and tolerate abuse, that becomes okay as a behaviour pattern. I look back now and I wish I would have broken it off two years after I got into the marriage--for my children.

I never told anybody, so I can't blame anybody for not helping me. So, at that point, I would say nobody could have helped me because I wasn't willing to trust anybody to help me. Obviously I had lost trust in the human race.

Staying out was hard, too. If not for my kids would I have gone back? My kids are really important and once I got out of it and saw what was happening to them, then there was no way they were going to take any more. If I hadn't had any kids, maybe I would have taken more, and maybe I wouldn't be here today. My kids were my reason for being really firm. Many times he tried to persuade me to come back. It was just a facade, but that's what you wanted to hear, because at some level you wanted to be loved or accepted. When he would say that, it felt good to hear it and you'd want to go back, but the other side would say, "No, it's a lie." I can remember crying and crying and crying and wanting to go back, but knowing that I couldn't. And knowing that I had to develop a support system with somebody that I could call and say, "I need help." I didn't stay in it after he tried to kill me, but there are terrible emotions that you go through. You don't want to go on with life. I went through that saying, life is too much--I want out of this. I thought, I can't really take my life because I've got kids to raise. But dealing with it all was so painful. I'm not a drinker, but there was a bottle of wine in the basement and I drank the whole thing because I just said, "I want out." I realize when people say I will take my life, it's because you don't know how to cope, you don't know where to go. And so, instead of

taking my life at that point, I said, "Hey, I'm in trouble. I know I'm in trouble. I drank this whole bottle of wine at one time." I told somebody that and I didn't have to hide it.

At one time, I thought there had to be something wrong with him--I mean there is, but it isn't because of me. A lot of circumstances caused his violence. If I hadn't had help, and if there hadn't been somebody to support me, I might not be here after the attempt because I think you become so low and so vulnerable that you might give up. I don't know. People really need a support system--a system that doesn't belittle you any more than you already are.

I'm the first one to say that within the church, most people cannot handle the violence that is in our world. That's sad. You'd have to seek out someone within the church who could make a difference. I don't believe there's many. But the church was not there for me.

A strong support system of parents is important, because if you don't have that--at whatever age or at whatever level you're at, you need acceptance from parents, and I had it. They were there when I needed them; they were there for the children. I was truly blessed with them. I did not have support from all of my family, but it didn't matter as much from my sister, as it mattered from my mom and dad.

It was important for me not to have a hundred friends. I had one good friend who was a surgeon and I really respected what he said. He was there at a different level. He knew exactly when to come see me. That sounds crazy, but he would have this feeling that he needed to come to my house and he would. When the church was telling me all the things that I should and shouldn't be doing, and I felt destroyed by them--he was a Christian as well--he was there at the level of my need. That sustained my faith.

And then I had friends who were just ears and would say, "I can't give you any advice," but they would listen to me. When I think back now, they need a medal--they listened to me go on for hours because I had to talk out my hurts.

Before the attempt on my life, there was nothing the legal system could have done or that most of the people around me could have done to stop it. The only thing that "could have changed things" would have been if there hadn't been so much shame so that I could have told someone.

My husband would say things like, "You know I could kill you. If you were out of the picture things would be better." But you think it's just that, just words. I don't know why you'd think that, but you don't believe

they're really serious. You take a lot of what a mate says too lightly.

I'm not always sure that when men or women are terribly violent to mates, that their end result is always that they want to kill you. But for some reason their anger, their frustration builds so high that it results in it.

When I started to look back over my life I'd think, "Oh, maybe he did really want to kill me back then." I can remember at one point that he had a lot of life insurance on me--something like a million dollars. I thought, "Now that's really funny." We didn't even talk about it.

We had a boat and we were going out on the lake. I like water, but have a large fear of water. He knew that, and so I can still vividly remember thinking, "Would he push me over, and then, it's like an accident?" After that I never wanted to go out boating much or do much ever with him in the water because I just had that inner fear. It sounds crazy, but you don't get those feelings, I don't think unjustly. I thought, "You crazy nut; you're crazy in your thinking." But you know, we're not crazy but we don't listen. We don't recognize all the pieces that have gone on that make us feel like that. Obviously I'd had enough abuse, enough that I thought he could do it. But still willing to stay. That's where I

just shake my head today and I think, "I don't know," but I do believe you're as sick as they are.

I can remember, I'd say this is what happened, and he'd say, no something else happened. And I tried recalling what went on. By the time you were done you really did think you were crazy.

I can sit here and say, "Man, I was crazy!" When I look back that's how I feel I was. When I look back it's like looking at somebody that I don't know any more. And then, finally you can really get in touch with reality. For me it was a really hard thing to say, "This is it. You are out and you are not coming back at any level, at any, I'm done. I'm not going for counselling." I was still led to believe by lots of people, give him a chance, go for counselling. I said, "No, it's stopping. If he wants to get himself better, that's his responsibility."

The community saw him as this businessman who was just wonderful. That's probably why I didn't do a lot of talking. I don't really believe they would believe me. Things now are only coming full circle. I always said that what goes around will come around at some point, and there's no point in continually bad mouthing him to everybody. That's what you want to do. You want to say, "Look at this idiot. Look what he's done." I decided that it was better to deal with me and let other people

find out who he was. At first I thought, "I want everybody to know. I mean, he's an idiot." Then I recognized that you deal with you.

We lived the facade of this happy wonderful home. We looked good--materially, we were doing well. We went to church. We did the family holiday. When we were out, we always had this happy facade about us--we lived a lie. It was hard then for the community to see what did go on, because things went on as in lots of homes, behind closed doors. So I felt the shame.

I would want to believe that he carried some of that shame. I don't know that though. I carried that shame because I am a very honest person and I felt that I wasn't. I think, "Who do you become honest with that you can trust." When people lose trust in their mate, I think it goes a lot further than there, because that's supposed to be your closest friend, confidante, whatever.

We met through the church, through a youth group. You know, this wonderful, Christian family that I was getting involved in, and that's how we met. We went out for two years.

And you know I look back now, there was some writing on the wall then. Not the violent part of it, but the, saying that I will be there to pick you up on Friday night at such a time, and he didn't show up. That gives you some clues that there's something going on. You let

go of a lot of things that you shouldn't. Because I look back to that and I think, "I should have never married him in the first place." I saw things then that I didn't listen to. He would take me out on a date and take me home early, saying he was tired and had to work the next day. Later, I would find out that he'd gone out with my girlfriend and some other people as soon as he dropped me off. Things like that tell you some characteristics about somebody; you'd better listen to them, but I didn't.

I've only learned through counselling that you need to listen to instinct. I listen to my instincts more now, but I still second guess it all the time. Is this real? Should I be listening? Am I over reacting? I wasn't in touch with that at all back then.

My family liked him, and he has the facade--as I think do many abusers--of being the wonderful, nice guy who says and does all the right things on the outside.

So I guess I must have seen the indications of problems as things that would change, because it didn't stop me from going ahead.

I can go back and give you an idea what went on in the last eight to ten years since we separated. After saying it was over and he was not ever coming back, he would break into our house, and he did that about five times. Those probably happened over a period of eight

months, and he would always leave a trace that he'd been there. He came through a basement window and then he'd put a knife in the door to let me know that he'd been there. It slid right through the door so that you couldn't open it from the basement. He would pick the lock. He broke in through the patio door. I remember calling the police and saying, "Somebody's breaking into my house all the time." They asked, "Do you know who it is?" I said, "Yeah, I'm pretty sure." And they said, "There's nothing we can do about it." Those were really scary times because you never knew when he was going to be there, or if he would be in there when I got home. The kids and I would go away and we always had to check our house when we got home. Was he in the closet? Where was he? You just became very paranoid of that. We were taken, after that, to two safe homes. He threatened to kill my daughter and me, made phone calls to my parents' home, and with that the police did come, and he was drunk. They took us to a safe home and we stayed there for the night. They took us home about four in the morning. At that point he was still on a restraining order and he should have been put in jail. The police said if he did it again they would. But they found where he was that night; he was remarried, and at that point his wife talked the police out of taking him to jail

saying that she would be in charge of him. It was not fair.

It was all a part of stalking and never letting go of control. He would always call. He would know where I'd been, and what time I got home. He would sit down the street and just watch the house. When I moved to the city, he would do the same things. He would follow me to work, or follow me home. Sometimes I wouldn't go home because I was afraid to go into the garage for fear he'd follow me. He would call and say, "I saw your daughter, Shannon. I saw her when she went to work at such and such a time at this place, and this is the time she left." He would follow them on the freeway, and he'd always let you know he was doing it. We had to live somewhere we felt was safe for about 10 days because it was the same thing. He would say he was going to kill us, or he was on one of his big outbursts of anger. I did have a good older neighbour and his wife and they would watch out for me. They even sat up some nights and watched to make sure that he wasn't coming. He often would come to the house and couldn't get in; he'd break in. The kids and I became fearful because of that.

I did track things he did right after we were separated--more for the legal end of it. But I don't any more. I don't really believe that the police can really do anything about it, but if I actually thought a

stalking law could do something, I would pursue it just so that Mark would stop--not just for me, because he will stalk many people. I think he needs to be stopped, but I really don't have any faith in the legal system or the police jurisdiction either. I think money is a big talker today.

Still, he phones and says, "I saw you at. . .", and you say, "It doesn't matter--it's none of your business what I'm doing." But he still circulates the house--drives around--checks it out, knows exactly what's going on. To me that's control. He doesn't like it when he's lost control and somebody's stood up to him and, so, he's still trying to get it back.

I wouldn't say that his behaviour changed a lot when he separated from his next wife. His ex calls me. The first time that she called, she said, "I don't blame you if you don't want to talk to me, for some of the things I said and did." She phones quite a bit because his family is very unsupportive of his mate, and the community tends to support him. I know she's looking for a support system that will believe in her.

I just got a call from her this week and somebody had broken into their house, had gone into her son's room, and then had left. It wasn't a normal break-in, because she had two really expensive cameras sitting and they didn't take those. That brought back an old fear and

that night I dreamt, not that he was stalking me, but it was a break-in of somebody else. I recognized how that still triggers an emotion from 10 years ago.

He stalks her too and has followed her, and she has phoned me to find out what vehicles, because he has a lot of money and drives a lot of different vehicles, so you never know. I think all abusers run kind of the same patterns, but Mark just has a little more to work with than a lot of people. You never know what vehicle, but you can sense somebody's following you. He's met her in the parking lot at her workplace. She did phone the police once and their first response was absolutely nothing. She was really upset. Another officer did call back and said, "We do need to be concerned about this." So, she felt a little better, but at least the police would look at it a little bit more than just shrug it off. She filed for physical abuse against him and when it was brought before the court, they said there were no other previous allegations against him, and yet I had filed against him, so I don't know what went on as far as that. I mean, we have a theory that he's bought lots of his judges and things off, but I mean we don't have proof, that's a speculation. But money talks.

There is a pattern. The abuse has gone from me to her to whoever else he's going to be involved with. When we're talking about physical abuse, he was very abusive

on the sexual side of things. He has had multitudes of affairs.

At the time when we called it quits he was involved with someone else, and then became involved with the woman he married. At the same time that she was pregnant, he got another woman pregnant. It's a very abusive situation in lots of areas. I don't know if people who are physically abusive, have lots of other areas where there's abuse as well.

I think he was married within two years.

I look back now and think about how I coped with the fear. I can remember my parents saying, "How do you stay alone?" And yet I did have a peace that I would be okay. Even though he stalked me and did all those things, I felt more in control and felt that I was safer outside the marriage. I look back now and I'm not sure why I had it, but I did have a peace that I would be okay. I did an awful lot of praying and I do believe that we're given strength that isn't ours. I look back now, and I don't think I would as easily cope with all that as I did then. I do believe that I did get an extra abundance of strength and peace from the Lord.

There's still an unsettling sometimes. I'll get those kind of jitters in my stomach when he calls or does something to let me know he's still around. But it's like fear on a small scale.

Mark's next ex was just going through an abuse allegation, and I was called in as a witness. I was called in to see if I had more information to give about Mark's character, and what he was like with the children and me. I never actually had to go to the courtroom to witness. I found it interesting because I just said to this private detective (a former police officer), "You know, I would like to believe that he would be convicted one of these times, but he won't be." He asked me why. I said, "Because of his money and power." He looked down and said, "Yeah, money talks. That's the sad part." And it is.

There is a lot of abuse, and a lot of people think it's lower class people who are involved in abuse, which it isn't. That's an old myth.

The areas that let me down were the police system, which involves the courts, and the church. If I thought legally that you could stop him from stalking I would document it. I would do whatever it took, but I feel it's a lost cause, so I might as well not cause myself pain and agony of all that. I might as well just go on with my life, and the sad part is, it's not only me being stalked. He has many other people that would be involved in this.

My kids, still to this day, believe that Mark is not finished--that he will still stalk me and kill me.

They're always saying, "Mom, don't ever antagonize him. Just do whatever he wants. Don't. Agree with him. Don't push him. Just let everything go." I don't think a month would go by without them saying, "Mom, when you come home and go in the garage, you be careful."

How many years have they lived with that? I don't think about it, but they do, all the time. When I did go through my divorce, it was brought up in court that I was married to someone like a Colin Thatcher. And, so that's always stuck in your mind--will he come and kill me at some time, when he's in one of his rages, when things aren't going his way. Although he is angry towards his second ex, it stems back to that I was his first wife. He was young, so I'm the basis to all these problems. I'm the one that started all his problems. He still directs most of his anger towards me, although he will be very angry with his second wife too, and will do just as many bad things. If you ever hear him, it's me that has caused this whole chain of events to happen. If I allow myself to sit down and think about it, then I do think, "Oh, would he ever come back and kill me?"

I have to say, "Well, if he does, he does." Because if you didn't deny that reality, I could never go on. I would be immobilized. I would be paralysed. I wouldn't have come to do this interview with you, for fear that he'd come here. That is the one thing--no matter what

risk I'm at--I do not let what I think he might do to me stop me from doing it. Maybe that sounds crazy, but that's the power I need over him. I won't allow fear to stop me.

Marilyn's Story

It was October 26th, 12 years ago. This time of year it's quite fresh in my memory--I start to feel that I'm getting closer to the date before I ever check the calendar, because I'm just emotional.

My husband, Mel, was manic depressive. At the time of our separation he was on lithium; then he went off lithium. He refused to continue with it. We had had several separations, but they were never really final. He'd just march in sweetly one day and announce that he was back.

But, this, the final cut, he had gone home and his sister who belongs to a fundamentalist church had told him that she had prayed for him, that he was healed and he didn't even need an aspirin. His father, who was also manic depressive, an uncontrollable, violent man, told him that there was nothing the matter with him, that I just hadn't been supportive enough to him. So, he went off his medication. Well, when he went off his medication, I think, I almost died because of that.

Prior to the breakdown, his levels were absolutely nuts. But because of his not taking his medication and going off so quickly, he became psychotic. He was violent when this was not even an issue, but when you would put the psychosis on top of his normal levels he was quite a package.

My husband and I were separated. I had lived in 13 years of violence with him, and he had promised to kill my family and me if I tried to leave him--it took me that long to get away from him. I got to the point in my life that death was preferable to life. I decided that if he was going to kill me he would have to do it, because I couldn't continue to live that way. I had planned to divorce him and to leave, and I was in the planning stages for three years. I was in my last month of planning and three weeks before the date that I had planned on leaving, we had another violent incident. I couldn't stand it another second and I left. My children were with my mother at the time, and I went to her place and stayed there.

We went through about six weeks of his attempting reconciliation and my trying to stay away from him - his attacking me again and raping me.

One night I had a dream that said it all. I dreamt that I was at home in my mother's house and he was there too. It was night and we were in the living room

watching TV or talking or something, the whole family. There was a sound outside. Something was trying to get in the windows, and he said it was a tiger. And he said "Don't worry I'll protect you," and he took us all into the little porch that she has, the tiny porch. He said just come in here with me and I'll keep you safe in here. And he shut all the doors. As soon as he had the door shut he turned into a lion and began to attack us. I thought that's it. This is what my life is. It was very, very clear. He can say I'm safe, I'm safe, all the time that he would be hurting me.

And then I realized that I just had to keep him away from me at all costs. I went to my lawyer and he told me that he would get me a restraining order. I went into hiding at my sister's place for five days while we waited for the restraining order to go through court and for him to be served with it.

I don't know why I thought for a moment that a piece of paper was going to protect me, but I thought I had done what I needed to do. He had never shown any respect for the law or for anything else, so I don't understand why I thought I was safe, but I did.

The day that he was served I was not going to go back to our joint home. We were living on an acreage. That night I was going to stop in, feed the livestock, and stay with a friend; but it was late and I was really

tired. I had the children with me, and I thought, I'll get up there early in the morning and do chores then. He was working in another town at the time, and he said that he would stay there, and basically he did. He came to see the kids on weekends, and I would leave. He didn't have a lot of contact with them, but he was still trying to get back in my good graces.

That morning I dropped the kids off at school--it was about 8:30. I drove into our yard and everything looked normal, and quiet, and deserted. I went to the house to put my things in, and as I was fumbling with my keys to open the door, the door flung open. He grabbed me and threw me into the house. Everything I had went flying and I screamed. I took one look at him and I knew he was insane. It was like looking into the eyes of a wild animal. He wasn't there. I looked around and he had taken everything in the house that was mobile, thrown it into the centre of the floor, and had poured diesel fuel over everything. It was just completely ramshackled. He had been there all night planning my death, and he was just totally wild. He told me that he would kill me.

He couldn't quite make up his mind whether he was going to kill me or whether he was going to rape me first--which he did. He told me then that he couldn't decide whether he would make me walk to the neighbours

naked and let me go, or whether he would kill me. And he had planned for himself to start the house on fire, and he had a gun, and he had a knife. He also had strychnine that he had mixed with chocolate milk and he was going to drink the strychnine. He just hadn't quite decided whether he would let me go or kill me. Then he decided he couldn't let me go, that we would go together and he was raving after this. He grabbed me, raped me, and then he allowed me to get dressed.

At one point I made a dash for the back door, thinking I could get out. I slipped on the diesel fuel on the linoleum, so I couldn't get out the back door. I found out later that he had taken six-inch spikes and spiked the back door shut, so there was no way I was going to escape the fire.

After I fell, he grabbed me--then I knew my death was inevitable. I was calm. I knew this was it. This was my last day. It was. So I just sat down. I knew my life was over. I had a couple more minutes so I talked. I started to talk to him.

As long as I showed fear he was right on top of me. And as soon as I calmed down, he started to get a little disoriented. He was very disoriented through the whole thing, but I threw him off his stride.

I said to him, "Mel, you know, you need help. We can, I can help you. We can fix this." He was very

agitated, and very thrown off by this conversation, because he understood fear, but he didn't understand my being calm. He said, "What! It can't be fixed. It's such a mess." And he started to ramble. I said, "Mel, a little soap and water, some garbage bags--we can clean this place up and it'll be all right. You need to see your doctor. You can have a chat with him, you know." I just kept talking. I said, "Mel, we care about you" (Oh, how I lied after what I had been through.) But I just kept talking to him and saying, "You know, it'll be all right. You're not feeling well." I just continued like a broken record, talking calmly, and the more I talked, the more he calmed down--and yet he was totally thrown off his stride. He didn't know how to deal with me when I was calm.

At one point he said, "Well, it's over, it's over." And I said, "What do you mean, Mel?". "Well", he said, "I'll be fired." And I said, "Why?". "Well," he said, "I'm late for work. I haven't got any time, I'm late for work." And he looked at the clock. We had a miniature grandfather clock that hung on the wall. You could open the front and turn the hand. So I went over to the clock, I opened it up and turned it back two hours and I said, "Mel, look. We have all kinds of time." He looked at it and said, "Yeah, I guess we do."

Now, as far as I'm concerned that was God's intervention. There's no reason under the sun why I would have come up with it. There's no reason under the sun why he would have accepted it, except that this was not my time and this was divine intervention.

Then he was willing to talk. I had seen the gun and, of course, I saw everything else that was there. I knew his intentions, but because he was thrown off by my talking I thought, if I can just talk enough to get myself out of this house. So, I said to him, "Mel, the animals, you haven't fed the animals yet. I didn't chore yesterday, they must be hungry." He was like a little kid. Yeah, that kind of triggered his memory. We used to have 500 animals. He knew what choring was all about, and he said, "Oh, yeah, that's right." He said, "Come with me. We'll do the chores. They might be hungry."

It was October 26th, and cold out, and he went out, I think, in his sock feet. He had no jacket, and I told him to get a jacket on. He was totally unaware of anything. He said he didn't want any jacket, and out he went. He came away from the gun and outside, and he stayed very close to me. We went into the barn and did the chores--fed the animals. Just as we were coming out of the barn, a half-ton came down the road with hunters in it. It was hunting season, and I thought, my salvation. As they came into the yard--there's a place

to turn around at the end of the lane--he grabbed my shoulder and said, "One move from you and I'll snap your neck right now". So, I couldn't do anything. I just stood there. I watched them come. I watched them turn around. I watched them leave, and I thought, well, that's it for me.

As we were coming back from the barn (I had bought a new half-ton), I said, "Mel, come see my truck. You haven't seen my truck." If I talked to him on a childish level we seemed to kind of connect. "Oh, okay, yeah, yeah, that's a good idea." We went over to the truck, and he put one foot in, and I said, "Mel, let's go for a ride in the truck." He thought about it for a minute, and I said, "We'll go see your doctor. I'll drive you to the city. We'll have a chat with him, then it'll be okay." And he thought about that for a little while and he said, "Okay".

I think I sent him into the house to get--or I went --somebody got his shoes and jacket and got him in his runners, and I got in the truck. He was okay for a couple of minutes--in that he wasn't threatening--he was just looking around, bewildered. I pulled out of the yard and we got down the highway that headed for the city. When we got close to the bridge, he started getting very agitated again. He started getting angry. He started raving--I don't remember what about. But

something had twigged his anger again, and, as we were crossing the bridge, he said, "I could grab this wheel and that's it for us." And I talked to him about something else. I said, "You know the ice will be on the river soon." Just completely, I wouldn't address his threats. We went up the hill, and all the way from the farm to the hospital. He'd calm down for a while, he'd get very agitated again, then he'd threaten me. And I had no idea whether we would actually get there or not, but I just kept saying "Look at that. There's a bunch of cows over there. This guy has hay bales." You know, I just kept taking his attention. As long as I could move his attention onto things that he knew and understood--which was farming--we got there. And we got to the hospital.

We got into the Emergency Department and we asked for his doctor. Well, his doctor wasn't there--so they sent down the Head of Psychiatry. You know, when you go into Emergency, it's difficult to say, "Well, my husband wants to kill me and this is why we're here." I don't remember what I said to them, but I told them, "He's having a breakdown. He needs some help right now." That's basically all I could say. He was standing right beside me. He wouldn't let me more than a foot away from him at any given time. They put us in a little room and shut the door - and we sat there. He would continually

stand up and pace around, get agitated, and I would talk to him about stupidity, and he would calm down. That's the way we went through about 20 minutes.

I'd say, "Look at that cute little cat on the wall." You know, things like that--just taking his attention away from what was going on in his head, because obviously there was major turmoil flipping around in his head--things that would make him angry. He would jump at things, and I wouldn't know what it was because I wasn't in his head. He would get agitated and I would take his attention to anything at all that I saw--the curtains--I don't know what all was in that room--I can't remember. Whatever it was I just kept checking his attention onto these things, and he would immediately relax.

About 20 minutes later, a doctor shuffled in, and he said, "What seems to be the problem?" Mel said, "I was about to kill my wife this morning." He didn't tell him that he'd attacked me and raped me. But he said, "I had her death planned, and I'm sick; I need help."

The doctor asked him when he was born, and Mel gave him his birth date. He asked him the birth dates of his children, and he gave them--just like this (snaps her fingers). The doctor asked Mel to count backwards from 100, and he did.

Now, had the doctor asked me my name I would've had to check my health card, because I couldn't come up with

it. And the doctor looked at Mel and said, "Well, we're full right now. Can you bring him back on Monday?" I said, "Doctor, I don't think you understand." (Aside, she laughs--"I know I owe a few people a few things because my day continues.") This was the Head of Psychiatry. Mel stood up and said, "You don't understand. I almost killed her." And the doctor looked at him blankly. So Mel said to him--and Mel is a big man, and this guy was not so big, Mel just towered right over him and said--"What would you like me to do? How would you like me to prove it? Would you like a body?" And the guy shrunk back a little bit and said, "Well, sit down, I'll be back in a few minutes."

So, he left me again, alone in the room with Mel, and came back about 20 minutes later and said, "There's a hospital bed in another city. If you drive him up there, they'll admit him." I said, "Is there no other way of getting him there?" He said, "No. No." So, I said, "Well, I'm not leaving this room until you sedate him." And he said, "I really don't think that's necessary." I said again, "I'm not leaving this room until you sedate him." So, very reluctantly he went off again.

You know, at that point I was so numbed out that I think a bomb could have blown up right behind me and I would not have jumped. But I just told him that I wasn't leaving. I would sit there as long as it took. He came

back with a little purple pill, gave it to Mel and sent us on our way. We got back into the truck. Oh, excuse me, in between there I had to phone my mother. She often comes to the acreage. I knew that if she walked in there she would have a heart attack. I couldn't get away from him, he wouldn't allow it; so I just said to him, "Mel, I need to phone Mom." He came with me, and I phoned her and said, "Mom, I'm in the city with Mel" (she knew there was no good reason why I should be there). I said, "He's not feeling well. I'm at the hospital with him. He sort of acted up. The house is an awful mess. Just don't go there until I get back." She said, "Okay, fine." She knew something was the matter, but she had no idea what.

We got half way across the city. When I stopped at a stop sign, Mel got out. I thought, "Now what. I've got this mad man running around the city, what am I going to do? He's going to kill someone." I said, "Mel, where are you going?" He said, "Well, I'm going to drive." And I said, "Mel, do you remember that little purple pill you took?" "Oh, yeah," he remembered it. I said, "It's going to make you very sleepy, so let me drive, please." I had to be really, really calm. The calmer I was, the calmer he was, and he said, "Oh, okay," and he got back in. All the way from one city to the other it was the same thing. Even though he had had this little pill, it was the same thing. He would get agitated. He would

start talking, as we came towards a semi, about grabbing the wheel. He was very agitated. He'd take his hand and put it on my neck and say, "I could snap your neck." I kept saying, "Look at those fields over there. Boy, did they have a good crop!" and that's how I talked him all the way to the hospital in the next city.

We got him in there and they admitted him. He was under voluntary admittance. They didn't fool around. They could tell without having him count backwards, that this man wasn't exactly calm. A psychiatrist, Dr. C, interviewed him, and then she interviewed me, and that was the first time that whole day that I could tell her actually what had happened. I have no idea what he told her, I was with him for part of the interview. He certainly gave her enough clues, but he knew what was happening. He knew what he had planned and he certainly told her some of the things. They padded him off to some place and got him into his room. And Dr. C said, "Well, we'll look after him here. He seemed quite agitated."

Of course, his part of the story was that he was so upset because I had left, that he was just beside himself. He was so distraught about the separation and that's why he did what he did. So they admitted him and I left. This was about six o'clock in the evening. I had basically been in a hostage-taking position from 8:30

in the morning to 6:00 in the evening when they finally admitted him.

From the hospital I phoned Mom. I told her where I was, that he'd had a breakdown, and that I was on my way home. I got home. I didn't give her too many details, but I told her that he was really sick, that it was really bad.

I went to the RCMP barracks and reported it to an officer, Jerry. I don't know what his last name was. He was a big tall, six-foot-four guy with a big gun. I remember that because I felt safe for the first time all day. I sat down in his office, and I told him what had happened. I said, "I've got livestock out there. I have to go do chores. I'm scared to go out there." He said, "I'll come with you. I have to. I have to see the scene." So, we went out there and he went through the whole house. He found the ropes where Mel had tied me. He found the knife that Mel had ready for me, because at the last, he couldn't decide if he was going to shoot me or knife me, but he had them both. He found the loaded gun that Mel had stolen. He found the strychnine. He saw the whole scene. He was the one who found the door nailed shut at the back; I hadn't got that far. He took pictures and a report. He did chores with me--checked all the outside buildings. First he left me in the car, then he did the chores with me, and took me back to the

barracks. He was visibly upset. He said, "I've seen murder scenes that are much less violent than that." He phoned Dr. C and said, "Tell him that if he steps one foot out of that hospital that he will be charged with 17 charges."

Dr. C said to him, "I don't know what you're talking about. From what I can gather it was a rather romantic episode." Those were her exact words, at which point, he basically lost it. He yelled at her and told her that the man was a potential murderer and that he had almost killed me and that should she release him she would also be culpable for what might happen. Then she hung up. She was not too happy with him. He phoned another RCMP barracks near the hospital, and he gave a verbal report. He told them that Mel was in the hospital and that they were to check to make sure that he stayed in there and that, were he to leave, they would need to be notified.

So, that was my day.

After that Mel was in the hospital for about a month. I stayed with my mother. Dr. C promptly put me on anti-depressants, which I got very sick on, and flushed down the toilet. My way of dealing with this trauma was to throw myself into work. I had three children to raise. I certainly needed the money. I would go to work and leave everything behind and live in my little capsule and deal with nothing for that period

of time except my work. And then I would stop working and fall apart. I stopped dealing with everything. I just stopped because I had three children. I had no idea what was happening--why it was happening.

For a month or so I lived with my mother. Then I realized that I had to reclaim my life. I couldn't continually hide from Mel. I lived in a state of terror that became so normal that I didn't know what it was like to live without the fear. Every time I drove down the road, every car that came towards me looked like Mel in it. Every time.

The RCMP officer was very good about it. I could hear the police cars and often saw them. He patrolled Mom's place. They patrolled it day and night for the first few weeks. He was mortified when I told him that I was going to move back to the acreage. He told me he couldn't look after me there, but they patrolled there at least once a day.

He was absolutely wonderful. Seeing how the system had failed me, he was determined that it wasn't going to fail me further, but he could only do so much. He did what he could. We talked a long time about my laying those charges, (either he or I could have done it) and about the consequences of my laying charges. He said that the best that I could expect was, if the judge was sympathetic, Mel would be put in jail for a year. At the

end of that time I would need to be in a different country with a different identity because we were both quite convinced that he would seek revenge when he came out. I didn't see any healing in that. Not for me, and certainly not for Mel--although I was not in the least concerned about Mel's feelings, to tell you the truth, at that point in my life. Finally, we decided not to press charges.

After that three or four week period, I decided I needed to reclaim my life. Mel had been discharged from the hospital and was in the area. I'm not totally sure where he was. I'm sure I knew at the time, but it was not a good time for me. Things are blocked--that aren't there for me--do you know what I mean?

At any rate, I reclaimed my acreage. I would not move the children back into, what I considered, an area of danger. But I started. First of all, when I went out to do chores I always took somebody with me. Then I used to go out for an hour at a time by myself. I would do the chores and then I would sit there until one hour was up. I would sit there in my car and look at my clock and, when the hour was up, I would leave. Then I added another hour and then another hour, and then I would sit in my house for that hour.

Now, this house had been completely gutted. Before this happened, I had two sets of close friends. The one

set, the one fellow walked into the house and said, "Well, burn the place" and left, and that was about it. The other couple came in and completely gutted it with me. And we started again . . . took every thing out and burned it . . . with the diesel, the fuel caught quick. We gutted the insides of the house and put it back together again--took all the carpet out and put in new flooring. We owned nothing. I had to get a voucher from the Salvation Army to get winter clothes for the kids. Everything we owned had been destroyed. I had no insurance because Mel's name was on the policy as well. So there was no help there. Financially I was in major straits. At any rate, this other couple helped me put the house back together.

I would come and stay in the house an hour at a time. Every time the dogs would bark, I would be frozen, petrified. I always had the keys in my hand. I always knew where the car was for a fast escape. Finally I could stay out there all day long--with no peace--but I physically could be there. Then I had to start figuring out how I was going to stay there for the night. I allowed myself to stay one hour into the dark, and then two hours into the dark. I would lock all the doors and windows, and I would go upstairs into the one bedroom where you could see the lights from the vehicles going by. There's only one road. You could get into the

acreage from the other side, but there was only one road. I would sit in the corner of the room with my back against the wall and I would wait for my hour to be up, and then I would leave. And hour by hour I got farther into my life, until I spent the first night there by myself. Of course, I did not sleep, but I did that for quite awhile. Probably it took me three months to reclaim that place.

When I felt comfortable enough that I could sleep at night, then I moved the children in with me. I knew I was taking a risk. It was not as big a risk at that time, because this attack happened in October. In January, Mel went home to his parents in another province. He met a woman out there and suddenly he wanted a divorce, and I was off the hook.

He was on some heavy duty medication and, physically, he was probably not a threat to me. Emotionally, it made no difference. The terror was there. The fear of everything--whether he was in another province or whether he was wherever--it made no difference. In two hours he could be back and he could be back on my acreage, before I ever knew. The terror stayed with me for a long, long time.

It's 10 years ago now, and I still fight with the fear. Sometimes it comes on me in the night--except now I know what it is, and now I can talk myself down. I

occasionally get panic attacks for no reason that I can put my finger on--but quite likely it's a trigger from something, some sort of trauma, and I can talk myself down and I can get past it. And it's controllable, but I have irrational fears as far as the safety of my children is concerned. I restrain myself and hold myself back, but the kids don't understand. They think that I'm just a doting, silly old mom, but they don't understand that it comes from years of trying to keep them alive every day of my life and then, the final trauma. You know my greatest, all consuming passion--what I was most wrapped up in my entire life--is the safety of my children.

Even now when they're out doing their own thing, they're nearly grown teenagers, the fear doesn't leave. And yet I know rationally, that they are fine and they are as safe as any teenager is, but particularly at night if I don't know where they are sometimes the fears come on me again and I still battle with it. It's not gone. It's manageable at this point in my life.

After the attack, when Mel wanted reconciliation I didn't. For me it was just a matter of waiting until he would agree to the divorce. Mel blocked every piece of paper that my lawyer sent him. It cost me a lot of money. I had to agree to pay him out \$10,000.00 to get him to finally sign the paper. Had he not met his present wife now, I don't know what would have happened.

I'd probably be dead. He would not have let me live. I owe that woman a lot. She doesn't even know it. At any rate then, you know, that's how I finally got the divorce. I divorced him March 11th, 1985. It was finalized on that date.

The day he almost killed me is one I'll never forget. And it's one I emotionally always remember. Sometimes the date is clear in my mind and sometimes I just feel it that day and then look at the calendar at the end of the day and say, "Oh, of course, it's October 26th." You know it just comes together for me at that time of year.

My children know basically everything. I probably left out a few gory details. They realize that all their stuff was destroyed. It was really hard for them. My oldest daughter was beaten by him a lot during the years, more than I ever knew. Whenever I was there I always stood in the middle. But I worked off the farm and many times I was not there to save her, and these things come out after. She was pretty stoic about the whole thing.

After the attempt on my life she started fighting in school, which was something she never did before. I took her to Dr. M--I took all three of them to Dr. M in the city. I explained to him that they had been through a trauma, that this had happened to them, and that I knew that they would need help and that I wanted it now, not

having to deal with it later on in their teen years.

He gave them some psychological and IQ tests. He told me I had three brilliant children--they were just fine--go home. So, there was my help. And, of course, after they hit their teen years each one of them hit their traumas. I would dearly love to spend some time with Dr. M, because I think I have more resentment towards Dr. M, Dr. whoever-he-was that day, and Dr. C, than I have towards this poor insane man who almost killed me. Because these people are the ones who weren't insane at the time. They weren't the ones who had their medication all mixed up and the whole bit. They were the ones who caused me so much trouble that I did not need; whereas Mel was insane. He had his excuse.

I would like society or somebody to explain what the medical profession is experiencing. That's who I need an explanation from.

In 1980, I finally had gotten enough courage to read an article in a magazine about wife abuse--something I didn't know existed even though I lived in the middle of it, because it had not been a part of my reality before being with Mel. Mel had kicked me very, very hard on my hip and I had a bruise the size of his steel toed boot. When I went to my doctor, I knew I was leaving. I didn't know when I was leaving, or how I was going to get out of this marriage, but I asked him to document and measure it

and he did. He patted my hand and said, "Tut, tut, have you done this or have you tried that," and sent me home. No shelter, no counselling, nothing; he sent me back into it. I didn't know there was a shelter until years after I was out of this marriage. Now, what was the matter there?

The last few years I lived in the same town as this doctor, and we ended up in the same church. He and I ended up at logger--heads over abuse issues. I never confronted him. I confronted his wife who was a counsellor. I told her about it and she just wept. When I told her, she just shook her head because this is not the only story; I'm not the only woman that her husband failed.

I feel that every doctor let me down when I sorely needed help. To say that I hold anger or blame--no--but to say that I want to see it different for somebody else--oh, yes. What has happened has happened. It can't be undone, but I don't ever want anyone to go through what I did when help was there, and I didn't even know it. Had I known there were shelters, I'd have gone. The reason I didn't leave him was because he'd promised death on my family and me. Had a shelter been offered, I would have had to think. He knew, if I disappeared, he always knew where my family was--my mother and my uncle and my aunt--and he had threatened them. I would, and did, make the

decision to stay for their lives, but had there been counselling, had there been some sort of help, maybe we all could have gotten together and decided what to do.

I always feel really tired after I've talked about it, and I guess I feel that today, too. I don't have the emotional knots that I did so many years ago. Even two years ago it was a whole lot harder to talk about than now. It always brings back stuff, you know, and it always will. One of the reasons that it's easier now, is that in the last year Mel has started his journey.

He remembers very, very little of what happened that day, or very little of what happened in our marriage. For 10 years I had a real problem with his next wife, because all he could remember were all the good things we accomplished. All he could talk about were all the things that Marilyn had done. She considered me a major threat. I realize this woman had absolutely no handle on what had really gone on in our marriage, but I had very little contact with them and I just let it be. It was difficult because any time the kids would visit she would embark on a path of character assassination and I didn't understand all the hate and venom. I had never done a thing to her, but it was because he couldn't praise me enough.

It has only been lately that I have been able to tell Mel my reality in parts, small, small parts, but my

reality. I said to his wife, "One day he'll read the divorce verdict (he's still got it sitting around). There are 53 counts of abuse which I came up with in 20 minutes. That was the reality of my marriage." You see, Mel's stories would be, "We built this. We built that. We built a huge house out on the farm." She'd been apprised that it was one of the show places in the province and it was. He was a workaholic and now so am I. Physically, we accomplished a lot of things--anybody could, with 18 - 20 hour days, and that's exactly how we worked. That's the story that she hears. She certainly hears very, very little of what my reality was.

The work itself was a form of abuse, aside from all the physical and emotional abuse that went on as we worked. We never stopped for meals. He's six-foot-two, he outweighs me easily by a hundred pounds or more. I weighed 92 pounds. You know, I had three small children. I was going to say I was allowed to feed them on time, but I was not. I made sure that they got fed and looked after as much as possible, always with a sting in that you get right back up here or you . . . They spent their babyhoods packed in half-ton trucks while we fenced--you know, things like that. I had no choice. When I was nursing I could nurse for three minutes max and he would say, "Come on, you've got to get back to work." There was always abuse along with the work.

The children, of course, took the abuse because they got fed when he allowed me to feed them. One time we had some garden produce in the front of the truck. The oldest was so hungry. The cattle were being fed and she was just going crazy, she took half a cabbage and ate it. Poor little tyke. She was terribly upset. I was very upset, but it didn't matter. I wasn't given choices. I had to do what I was told or I suffered the consequences of it. As much as possible, I would send the children to their grandmother's, my Mom's house. Certainly when I felt an attack coming on I would, and I could. Sometimes I knew. It would build for days. And then it was off to grandma's and they would spend a day or two 'til I took my beating, and then they would be back and he would be fine for a while. Other times it just came "bang" like that (snaps finger). It was very, very difficult trying to raise the children and give them the attention that I wanted to. That's my greatest regret that I couldn't be for them. The counsellors keep telling me, "You did the best you could have done." That's right, but it wasn't good enough. It really wasn't, and that's really hard.

I regress any time I hear of a killing, of a woman that has died, or a woman and her children, or her children have died. Four years ago the community I lived in lost two children. I knew one of them quite well and I ended up in the hospital that night with a panic

attack. I could not handle it. I don't know why I made it and others don't.

When I talk about divine intervention, I firmly believe that it was divine intervention that carried me through. But one of my spiritual struggles is why one is spared and one is not. Why are we not all spared, and why some struggle and some don't. But, it's part of my continued spiritual struggle. I believe that my time was not right and that because I was spared, it was for a very specific reason. I'm not sure yet what that reason is. Certainly, I try to work with others who have experienced what I have or who may be experiencing what I did, on a very, very limited basis.

The first person that ever knew about the violence, that I knew of, was Peter, a friend, a distant relative and neighbour that we were farming with. I guess he had suspected that there was something going on. I hid it. I was so ashamed of the fact. I didn't understand violence. There was no violence in our home. I assumed that if he was hitting me, I was at fault. For the first eight years of our marriage I spent my whole life just jumping around trying to do everything perfectly. Because, of course, it was my fault that he hit me, so what was I doing wrong? If I could cook a little better. . . if I could clean a little more . . . if I could work a little harder. . . if I could just . . . what was it,

you know? I was obviously doing something really wrong, and I tried and tried to fix it, and I couldn't fix it. Because the problem wasn't with me, it was with him--but it took me years to figure that one out.

And because it was my fault, I was so terribly ashamed of it, I had to hide it. This fellow probably suspected that it was going on and he didn't say anything to me until one day when I had been chasing livestock in circles. We had 317, to be exact, that were supposed to be put in a barn in a pasture a few miles from our place. All of them had to be accounted for, and all of them had to be in. I had run them through the chutes three times and I couldn't get that number. I was up to 305 or something like that. I was some short. I couldn't find them in the pasture. I sat down and started to cry. Peter happened to be going past on the highway. He saw my truck there. He knew that that was the time of day I always had to put in the animals, so he stopped to help. I was just dissolved in a pool of tears, and I always had a big smile on my face--I was never down. He was not really shocked.

He said, "What's the matter?"

I said, "I can't do this. I can't go back home until I've come up with 317 animals and I can't find them." I was crying. He said, "Why"? And I said, "He's going to hit me."

He said, "He hits you a lot, doesn't he?" and I said, "yes".

The jig was up. It was out of the bag. You know, that was the beginning of the end for Mel. Because when somebody knew, it was the first connection. And this fellow, I don't think, ever said anything to Mel directly about it, but he subtly made sure he was always there. Anytime we would be working together--we farmed several hundred acres together--anytime we'd get into a tense situation and he would see things were starting up between Mel and me, he would send me to another field, or send me home. I don't know how many times I'd go home and look after the children. I mean, I've blessed him how many times, because that's what I had to do. And it would just take the tension away. Mel could never confront him. He would never hit me in front of anybody else and would never hit anybody that could hit him back. It was as simple as that. This guy was as big as he was.

This fellow spent his time doing what he could trying to keep me safe--just popping in and out of fields all the time and things like that. He took the burden upon himself to keep me safe because he had no idea how else to do it. He's aided me many, many, many times; there's no doubt about it.

He saved me from a suicide attempt, and, in fact, that was the same day that he confronted me. It was earlier in the day.

We lived along the river bank. We built a house along the river with a gorgeous view of the river. Even when things got really bad--I had been born and raised close to that place--I could always look out at the river and find a little bit of peace and get myself together for whatever was coming next. The children were napping down in the house and I was sitting up on a pile of building bricks looking at the river. I looked out at that river and saw nothing but black. The rest of my life, it was nothing but just black. I knew I wanted to die, and I thought about my bottle of valium, that my dear doctor had given me, because I was nervous, you know. I could envision that bottle, it was opening by itself, and I wanted to go down and take the whole bottle. I thought about my children. Many times I considered suicide, but I thought I'd leave them to this monster, that's what always held me. I thought of them and I thought of the bottle and I really thought that I couldn't go on. I said, "God, there's nothing. You're going to have to send me somebody." Two minutes later this fellow drove into the yard. He saw me sitting there. He saw that I was not in a good state of mind, but it was always joke, joke, laugh, laugh, ha, ha,

because that's the way I've got through my life. He tried to cheer me up and teased me a little bit and went. That's all that I really needed to break that black mood. Then it was time to deal with something else and the moment had passed. It was later that same day that he confronted me with what he thought he knew, and once he said something, the cat was out of the bag.

He never told anybody. There were years that his wife, I don't think, even knew about it. He just kind of did what he needed to do to keep me safe, and that was it. I didn't tell anybody else until the first separation. That would have been about 1982. We'd left the farm and things were really, really bad. We had been in and out of counselling. Mel had been in and out of psychiatrists' offices, but he was not accepting any help.

The psychiatrists knew about the violence but I minimized it to an embarrassing degree. The heart of my life was control. Control myself, keep the children safe. I lived in such a totally- out-of-control environment; when I think about it now, it was totally insane. I was just as crazy as he was. I didn't know how to deal with it. The psychiatrists knew about the violence, they heard my side of it. I'm not exactly sure that I minimized it, but Mel certainly did, and he had a really convincing story.

Mel had two personalities. He was mister, ha, ha, nice guy all day long. He'd come through our door, shut the door and then he was just this monster after. When he came to his appointments, he snowed whoever he was talking to. I don't think anybody, not one of them, understood the depth of what I was really living through. Possibly his last psychiatrist who was not there the day of the attempt would have understood.

I can't remember exactly when Mel started going to a psychiatrist. I believe it was late 1978. I don't remember the incident, but it would have been a bizarre violent incident that might have scared him just a little bit, too. That would have gotten him there the first time, but then the minimizing came. Of course we're talking about the cycle of violence. He would show up in a doctor's office in the honeymoon phase, for heaven's sake. This was not the reality of what was happening. I would be yo-yoed up and down so much--this time it's going to be different. It's not like I had a choice, even had I not believed that. I had to stay because of the death threats and that's all there was to it, but I still got psyched into believing that it was going to be different. Then I would let my guard down a little bit and relax, and then it would cycle around again. There'd be another violent incident, and then he'd be okay again.

Before we moved out to my home town, I was beaten regularly every weekend. At that time I desperately wanted to tell someone. I was close friends with a United Church minister, Roy, and his wife. He was my safety net, in that if he showed up then I didn't have to worry about Mel beating me. As long as there was someone around, Mel worked harder, isolating me as much as possible. When I went out, I was a gregarious person; I always found a friend. He could move us as often as he wanted, but within a week I had a new circle of friends which affected him, so he kept moving us. We never stayed more than two years anywhere until we moved back to the town which was my home. That was also his undoing, because little by little I was able to grab onto supports and support systems that I hadn't had.

A couple of years ago I got to see Roy again, and I wrote him a lengthy letter after a visit we'd had, and asked him if he knew what had been happening to me with Mel. He said he didn't. He said that all he knew was he had an extreme dislike for the man from the first time he ever set eyes on him. So, intuitively he was picking something up, but he didn't know what it was.

I, of course, was a master at hiding. As badly as I wanted Roy to know what was happening in my life, I think, almost as badly, that I didn't want him to know, because it was such a disgrace and such a shame.

There was one time that something happened between Roy and Mel that saved me one more incident. Mel was into canoeing; he loved to canoe. I'm petrified of water --I do not swim--I'm scared of water. Mel would force me into the canoe and he would teach me to canoe. At one of our canoeing lessons he hit me with the paddle, which he often did. He sprained my fingers which, because I was a pianist, were often a target for him, and he knocked my huge diamond off my engagement ring. It dropped into the boat, not into the water. Twice I had to have my rings sawed off me because of these attacks.

Water is the one thing that really scared me. But I didn't know the meaning of fear until he took our one-year old daughter, strapped her into a car seat, strapped the car seat into the canoe, and then went canoeing with her. That petrified me. It was to the point that I couldn't stand the sight of the canoe.

I asked Roy to teach me how to canoe because I thought there's no way this man is going to stop. I have to learn. I have to get over my fear because I have to do this and I have to be able to swim. I have to be able to save my child. So I asked Roy, who was an avid canoeist, if he would teach me how to canoe. He said, "Yes, why do you want to learn"? And I told him "Because I'm so petrified of water and Mel likes to do this." Well, a month later Mel sold the canoe and, out of the blue, told

me that it was gone. Roy and he had a confrontation, which neither one of them will admit to having. I don't know what Roy said. The canoe was gone and Mel never said another word about it.

Maybe I owe Roy a little more than I'm giving him credit for--to take that canoe away was to give me a second life. I was that petrified. The weekends were hell and if it included a beating I couldn't travel. You know it was just bad.

My Mom didn't know what was happening until after the final attack. She knew that the man could be violent. She knew that he was a major jerk in the way that he talked to me, and to her, and the way he treated the children. She never saw him hit us, because of course, he never would hit us in front of her.

My uncle, who was as close to a father as I ever knew--my dad died before I was born and I was raised with my mom and my uncle and aunt, and a couple of other uncles and aunts, and grandma and grandpa. I had a sister a year older, so we were a community project--knew our marriage was very bad. He wanted me to leave Mel and he was quite vocal about it. He didn't want to know too many details. My uncle died very quickly of a cancer when my oldest was a month and a half old. And I'd been married about two years to Mel. Had Uncle Alan lived I think things would have been very different. He would

have gotten involved. He wasn't one who would have stood back for his own safety or anything else. He just wasn't there to do it. On his deathbed he made me promise him that I would leave if I felt that I couldn't stay.

He was very worried. He didn't know even, at that point, what he was worried about. He knew that the man was a very angry person. I don't think he actually thought that Mel was hitting me, because knowing him, even in his weakened state, he would have done something about it. But he didn't. He knew I wasn't happy and that was enough for him. There's no way I could let Mom know. It's not something she could have handled. She had enough trouble with the fact that I was having difficulty raising my children because I was working so hard. To her, that was big enough trauma.

My sister disliked him intensely from day one. She stayed away from him and from me as much as possible. It was not until eight years into the marriage, after Peter found out--actually Peter told me he knew--and the jig was up, that I did confide in her. She loathed him and hated him more. It was no surprise to her, but her words were "I knew it was bad. I didn't know it was that bad", and I believe it. I mean, we were always all over the place. It wasn't like we lived in the same area. When I moved home, she was living in the city. I was living on a farm. I worked seven days a week. I saw her very

seldom and when I did, it was always quite strained. We never regained our close relationship until after my divorce went through. She was the one that hid me when the chips were down. She hid me at peril to herself, her family, her little baby. She knew. She knew she was at peril; he threatened her too. She was there for me when I needed her, but it took a long time for me to tell others what was happening. Occasionally people questioned me about my bruises but I had an excuse for them all.

The first time Mel hit me was after we were married. We were married on June 19th and it was June 30th, my 21st birthday; he hit me with a tire iron. He put a huge bruise on my arm. We had just moved. He had a job and I'd never in my life been more than 50 miles away from home. I was feeling scared and homesick--very, very homesick.

When I married, my family did not attend. They were very much against it. We ended up in a big blow up. They were against my marriage because he was divorced, not because of anything else. They may have seen other things, but their objection was because he was divorced. I just flew in the face of that insanity and said, "excuse me, everybody deserves a second chance, blah, blah, blah". I was so busy fighting them that I never

turned around to see the guy that I was marrying. I was a typical rebellious fool.

I had a relationship that meant an awful lot to me that they had broken up when I was 19. Yeah, 17, 18, 19. This fellow wanted us to get married and I wanted to finish my music degree first, but we probably would have gotten married without interference. They said he wasn't good enough for me, why don't you wait until you're older; and finally he just gave up. He said, "I don't know what I'm going to face when I come to pick you up. I just can't do this anymore." He left and I was totally devastated.

When Mel tripped in about a year later, I was determined that they would never tell me who I was going to date and who I was not. He was not violent towards me when we were dating. He was violent towards them. At one point they wouldn't let me out of the house so he broke the window to get me out of the house. After that they opened the door and away I went. You see, the clues were there. The stuff was there. At the time, I thought, this is theatrics. I didn't know the difference. I thought he was trying to prove a point. I didn't understand violence. I didn't understand the level of anger. He was agitated a lot, but he had recently gone through his other divorce.

He told me at the time that she divorced him on physical and mental cruelty. He said, "Yeah, there was mental cruelty, but there was no physical cruelty. We just threw that in to expedite the divorce." I never read the divorce papers. I should have. I didn't and I wouldn't. I believed him. There was a cousin of mine who had seen Mel hit his wife, who years after said, "You know, I maybe should have told you, but didn't." It was a little too late by the time he got around to telling me about it. By then I knew.

On two occasions, after we were engaged and had our wedding date set, we had long heart-to-hearts. In one he told me that he didn't think he should marry, but he didn't come out and say why. See, he himself knew that a problem with violence was there, but he wouldn't come out. At one time I remember him saying to me, "You know, you can hit somebody you love and still love them." This did not compute with me at all at the time, because I had never hit somebody I loved--it's not part of my reality. I did not understand that statement and now I understand. He was giving me warning signs, but had I had any idea at all . . . I didn't.

We had a short courtship. I really didn't have time to get to know him. I was busy getting thrown out of the church and being shunned by family. It was difficult.

My attention was not directed toward this man I was marrying but to my rebellion.

His mother knew about the violence, but she would never discuss it with me. She always questioned my bruises and I always gave her something flippant. From day one I gave her a flippant remark. She never said, "Did he hit you?", but she always wanted to know what happened, and I always had some stupid excuse.

I found out half-way through my marriage that she had been beaten. She may not be today, but certainly in the active years of child-rearing, she was beaten on a regular basis by her husband, his father. They are still together. She spent her life patting his butt and saying, "Joe, Joe, that's all right, Joe". She sacrificed five children while she did it. Not one of them has come out of that unscathed. Mel took the brunt of it. His dad was only 19 when he was born. His dad didn't want to be a father. Mel was a surprise package. Joe was incredibly physically cruel to his son and, to this day, Mel and his dad have got issues that will not be touched because his father refuses to look at them. But they're huge hurts to Mel.

Many people could have done or said something to save me from that final attack, but didn't. Had my doctor--who was a neutral party--intervened, sat me down and said, "Here's the name of a counsellor that deals

with abused women. Here's the shelter. You have options. He cannot do this to you," it would have helped. Had he done more than patted my hand--and he was great at that--but he couldn't go past that. Had he done more than just basically said, "Oh, you'll be all right", it would have helped.

I needed very badly to have someone pull me out. I worked, I began to build my own strength. I went into this emotionally and physically abusive situation as a relatively intelligent human being; I came out a blithering idiot. It took a long time for me to come back to my self. You are told you're stupid every day of your life. You are told you can't do anything. You're told that what you're doing isn't right and it isn't good enough. I remember--it was probably the first week of my marriage--Mel and I being at his parent's house, and Mel calling me stupid. I thought it was a joke. At that time it was a joke, and his mother just stopped, "Oh, Mel, don't ever, ever say that to her." She took it very seriously, and I laughed and said, "That's okay, Mom, I know he doesn't mean it." But you remember those words so well, because not only did I realize he meant it, I learned to believe it.

When you're in that state of mind you can't pull yourself out. You cannot. Someone has to pull you out. My doctor could have been the one, but he wasn't. He

just let it be. When he measured my bruise, he could have been the one that said, "Okay, this is what you need to do." He could have given me the strength, or the connection, or something to start pulling me out of it. How much did these other psychiatrists know? They probably knew a whole lot--to tell you the truth, I really don't remember what I told them. I was not hiding the physical abuse, but I'm sure I was not graphic about any particular attacks because what we were talking about here was Mel and his parents and his migraine headaches and all of his physical symptoms, and things like that. And I was attributing Mel's violence to all the problems he had, so let's fix what happened here with Mel and then he'll quit hitting me. I wasn't aware that what I was into was serious spousal abuse, not just a symptom of his illness. I didn't understand it at the time, and nobody, none of them, ever explained it to me.

They've read more books than I have. Surely to heavens they should have picked up on that, because I didn't when I was dealing with them. Of course, we were usually talking about Mel. We never got into what was really happening between him and me. It was mentioned, yeah. I don't think I spent a whole lot of time on it. I doubt I was really direct with them, but I also doubt I was hiding much, you know. If I said he was very angry this week and we had a huge fight, I probably left out he

hit me and I got a nose bleed. I very well may have, because I still thought if he hit me then what's the matter with me?

I think this intervention thing can't be stressed too much, because when you are emotionally and morally beaten to the point that you have no wherewithal of your own, you can't pull yourself out. You can't pull yourself out by the boot straps. You can't. The only reason I had started to file for divorce and realized that eventually I was going to come out as a survivor was because I'd been working with my lawyer for three years. He knew, for three years, what was going on. He did not take it particularly seriously. Until the final attack he kept pushing for the best separation agreement for me; he kept pushing Mel. I kept saying "Don't push him. I don't want this man's chain rattled. For heaven's sake, agree already". The lawyer said, "No, no, I'll get you the best deal I can." John's a pretty top notch lawyer. He was going to get me the best deal, but he was going to get me killed in the process. Finally, after the second last attack he said to me, "Marilyn, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I didn't realize". "John, you wrote down 53 counts of abuse here. You had it all documented."

He had that documented three years before the final attack. He knew what my life was, but he didn't realize

that when I said this man could kill me, it meant THIS MAN COULD KILL ME. I got that apology about a month earlier, when I was raped and almost killed. At that time my head missed the porcelain by half an inch or I would have died that day. That was when John took it seriously. But still the attack came after that.

I don't know what it takes for people to hear you when you speak to them. Considering how difficult it is, it takes how many years until a woman ever opens her mouth? You would think somebody would listen when she finally does, but that wasn't the case.

It's so important that somebody reach in and pull that woman out because she doesn't have the wherewithal to do it herself, and that didn't happen for me. Because I didn't have it, it was a more gradual thing. I started to be my own emotional strength. A huge weight fell off me when Peter knew what was happening to me.

At that time our farm was doing very well. I was the first woman who was appointed to a particular board. I did a lot of work in Regina and throughout the province. I went into this old boys' club and proved myself to them. They assumed when I was appointed that I would go in there and make their coffee, but I made that pretty clear that this was not going to be the case. I had a heck of a time; I was in my element when I was in that board meeting. Everything I used to be was coming

back. I had a heck of a time proving myself to them, but when I finally did, I gained respect. When I spoke they would listen. Well, it had been a long time - the only males in my life who listened to me when I spoke were Peter and these people. I started to gain a little idea of self-worth, and as that started happening I started to get back a bit of me that had been long gone.

1980 was a turning point year. It was the beginning of the end for Mel; there's no doubt, for our marriage. I started the divorce. The other thing that started the divorce proceedings, aside from the fact that I was feeling strong enough to start, was his affair with a nun where he was working. He kept leaving these hints that this was happening. I didn't file until 1982 because it was our 10th anniversary. We were married in '72, and as he came home the day of our 10th anniversary, I remember thinking that whole day, I have pulled myself to this cornerstone bleeding. I could envision myself pulling myself over a barbed wire fence--that was my 10 year mark. Nonetheless, I had bought a new dress and made a wonderful supper, and I was going to try to pull myself together for this day. He came down the hill and told me that he had slept with another woman that week. He was gone during the week to work and that was his 10th anniversary present to me. That was the last straw.

The next day I went into the city and started the long, slow procedure of filing for divorce. It might have come faster, but my lawyer went on a safari to Africa or some place in the middle of it. I had to wait for him to get back (laughter). The bizarre things in the middle of it all!

The part I haven't talked about much is the rapes. First of all, there were three very violent rapes.

The first violent rape--we were separated and it was Mother's Day. He came over, probably with flowers, some wretched little excuse.

That would have been '82 or '83. We had about two six-month separations between '82 and '84. He sent the kids on ahead to grandma's house and he raped me. I was upset about it but I just swallowed the whole thing, that's just what had happened. I didn't say anything to anybody at the time. I'm just wondering whether I did, I think I did with my lawyer.

At the time, I did not realize that he could be charged. We were not legally separated as yet. It was just another hateful incident--in how many? I didn't feel that he was going to kill me that time, but it was, nonetheless, a violation--one of the minor violations compared to what was to come.

The next time that he raped me we had a legal separation, and I was living on the acreage with the

children. That would have been a year earlier because he was still in town. I remember him coming back to the acreage, and I knew he was out of control. I could see the agitation. All of this was very, very threatening. At that time he was coming out to the acreage on the weekends, too. He'd spend a Friday night or Saturday with the kids and I would go into town to Mom's.

One weekend that he came out, I had tickets to the Hagood Hardy Concert (funny how some details you just never forget) with a cousin of mine. She and I went to this concert, and it was so good. I stayed the night at her place--she had an acreage about eight miles from our place. I don't remember whether we had planned on it, or whether I'd phoned Mel and said that I was staying with her that night. When I came back Sunday morning, he was very agitated. He said he was leaving, and we fought over something--I don't remember what it was. It was little. This was the man who could fight by himself. The kids and I were going to go to church--it was quite early in the morning--but I was upset. I probably had been crying. I decided we would stay home. The kids went into the living room to watch cartoons; Mel left; and I locked the door behind him. I needed a breather, so I went to the bathroom and had a good cry. Maybe I was there 10 minutes and the door was flung open and Mel came charging through the bathroom door, and shut the door

behind him. We had a tiny, minuscule little bathroom, which was bathtub, toilet seat, washer and dryer, sink, and just this tiny little space in the middle. He grabbed me by the throat, forced me down and ripped my clothes off me. When he pushed me down, he just threw me down, and the chances that my head did not hit a piece of porcelain--there was a space this big (gestures).

Somehow or other, my head just hit the floor, hard mind you. I had a real goose egg on the back of my head. And he raped me--shredded my pantyhose and held me by the throat. I couldn't move, but he didn't really injure me. He raped me and left, slamming the door as he went.

Five minutes and he was gone. I kept the door shut and I put myself together again and I washed my face. I didn't even retrieve the shredded pantyhose from behind the washing machine. I got myself together, got the kids into the car, went into town, and dropped them off at my Mom's. At Mom's place I wrote everything down. I called my lawyer. I told him what happened and I called the police. I went over to the RCMP barracks and reported the rape--this was a month and a half before the final attack--they took my report. They phoned Dr. S at a nearby town to see if he would do the medical examination. He refused. He didn't want to get involved. Then they phoned a doctor in another town to do the examination, and he was wonderful. He went

through the whole thing with the kit and the swabs, you know, everything. And then the evidence was sent away and held.

I had a long talk with my lawyer as to what to do, whether to charge Mel or not. I felt far too threatened to charge him, and really, far too scared to do it, because I didn't know what would happen.

After Mel left my place he went to the city to visit my cousin and his wife who are part of the Salvation Army corps. He ended up going to the church service or he ended up there in the middle of the church service; at any rate, after the service he told them what had happened--I'm sure minus the details, and said that she's okay, I don't think there's any problem. During the day he phoned me to see if I was all right. Yeah, what on earth would I say to a phone call like that!! I was gone part of the day, at any rate, because I was at the hospital in another town.

During the rape I didn't challenge Mel because I was scared to. After the rape my lawyer didn't push that point a whole lot. A day after the rape Mel went to his lawyer. His lawyer explained to him that now he had two rapes against him, because there's no statutory limitations on rape. He had raped me on that Mother's Day a year earlier, and now he had raped me again. These charges in part led to his feeling of desperation, why he

had to kill me and himself; because he thought it was only a matter of time before I sent him to jail--so that was part of his thinking and reasoning for the final attack a month later. Then seeing as he was going to kill us both, why not rape me one more time, which he did, and in the most humiliating manner on that final day.

He had, I think it was about a year earlier, when we were still together, had gone out to the coast and bought Christmas presents. One of his Christmas presents to me was a God-awful little negligee, that was a French maid's costume. He told me to put it on. I wasn't going to put it on, but he forced me, and then he had the pleasure of ripping it off me and raping me. He had my arms tied, he had tied my legs. He had me tied on the floor--one hand on each side of the chesterfield, and again it was mercifully short. After that he allowed me to get dressed so we could go do the chores. This was the day of the final attack.

To tell you the truth, I'm not sure whether that last rape was documented with the RCMP. There was so much else going on that I think I probably could not have reported it at the time. I don't think I said anything until after. I think I would have discussed it with a woman, but there were no women at the detachment, and I couldn't discuss it with a male. So I didn't. The man

had almost killed me. I had enough charges, what was one more? I did have two rape charges on him. One more didn't make any difference by that time.

On some level, he raped me every day. My children were the product of rape. There was never any consent on my part when it came to sex. He needed sex every day and that was my job, period. Sometimes I would get physically very sick and I would want to vomit in the midst of it. But I would try to make it through the three minutes and then go to the bathroom and be sick. That's what our sex life was for years and years. Would I draw back when he touched me I was threatened and that's all there was to it.

In the last year or two I've been trying to really look at what has happened. Until then, my way of coping point was to run from that memory--work as hard as you can--keep your mind as busy as possible, because if you don't have time to think then you don't have time to feel.

I remarried a year later. We are experiencing great difficulty and have been separated for the last two and a half years. We're in the midst of a possible reconciliation--we're on a six-month trial. My reason for ending the second marriage was because of my husband's alcohol abuse, but emotionally I just didn't have the strength to live with a husband who was like an

overgrown child. I married in fear. I was afraid to be alone. Joe was there and he was the exact opposite of everything that Mel was. He was very non-threatening, a very quiet sort of fellow. So, you know, another knee-jerk reaction. I've been doing that a lot in my life. This is one of the things that I continue counselling about--not living life as a reaction to the things that happen--I'm working hard on that. I think I'm getting better at it.

I have finally recognized the fact that, financially, I've needed to work two and three and four jobs, but emotionally I've needed it even more. If you're too busy, and even sexually--who on earth would feel a sexual feeling after 16 hours worth of work? You just drop into bed. It's not a problem, you know. So, I've done that. I've just buried all my feelings doing piles of work.

I'm the type of person to get bored easily. I need a challenge at all times, and if there isn't one, I'll give myself a week to cast about and I'm into another project. I'll never go longer than a week. I find it difficult to be by myself. If I'm by myself I'm reading, voraciously. I always read at least five books at a time. I'm always into reading things and different projects, and that keeps my mind occupied. The times that I allow my feelings to surface, I cry. I don't like painful

feelings, and I've learned how to numb them by a socially acceptable method which is working like an idiot. I don't drink. I don't run around. I don't do a lot of other things, that people use to numb pain. I use work, and study, and that sort of thing. Work works for me because I had four children to raise--the fourth one is from my second marriage--and it's socially acceptable for a woman. I have gotten a little past that since my 40th birthday--I went through my "is that all there is stage"?

I have been in counselling for quite awhile. I'm entering the abuse counselling course in February, missed the September course because we were moving. At times I allow myself to look at these things. I was a part of a women's abuse workshop last March or April, through our church group, which I found good. There were 13 of us there that had been abused in one way or another. I thought I was handling the weekend really well. I went into it making sure that my emotions were in check and that I wasn't getting too deep into it. I thought I would pull it off. I could visit with the women and it ended Sunday at noon. I had a one o'clock job to do in the city, got about half way there and started to have a panic attack. I opened the windows, got the breath of air I needed and talked myself down. "You can't do this. You can't allow this. This is not the time." And I actually made it to the city. That was the first time I

was able to actually stop an attack once it had started. I talked myself into the fact that no, I was not having an entire attack. My life is not in danger here and I just kept talking myself down until I was able to gain control. It was my reaction to how well controlled I had been for the entire weekend.

I control myself a lot. My anger slips occasionally. It has slipped with Joe, my husband, when he has tried to control me. There is not a person on the face of this earth that will ever control me again. When he has tried to pull it on me, the depth of my anger has scared me. I do not feel that I would kill him or anything, but I've felt that there was no end to it. I had a huge screaming fight with him at my cabin this summer. He just refused to leave. He refused, and he was pulling the power thing on me, and I screamed until I thought my insides were coming out. He left after that. He had Michelle, our daughter, with him. That's when I knew I had really overreacted because she had witnessed me totally losing control. I scared the daylights out of them both. It took me three hours of sitting and looking at that angry little river before I could stop shaking enough to get into the car and drive out of there. I thought I was calm. Then I drove 12 miles to my Mom's place. All the kids were there. On the highway--I think it was a Sunday night--the traffic was coming towards me

and I mentally hit every car. I thought, "Oh, Marilyn, you are really messed up," and that made me hang on twice as tight to my counselling. I realized that you can only push feelings away for so long.

There have been very few times in my life that my pain and my experience have been validated. I felt it validated at that workshop. I do not feel it validated with most of my close friends, "Well, look how well she's doing now." I don't lose control around them and I portray this very capable person. They don't see me at 2 o'clock in the morning when I wake up with an unknown terror. Because I work so hard, and for no other reason, I accomplish great things. They look at me and say, "Well, look at her. She's just fine." They haven't the foggiest clue. So, there is no validation. They don't say to me, "Jeepers, it must have been really terrible," because I don't tell them it was really terrible--as simple as that. It's part of my facade. Most people, when faced with something as ugly and painful as that, look away. They don't want to hear it, they don't want to see it.

Last winter the church that I belonged to--I've since moved to another community--was really battling with abuse issues--mainly child sexual abuse, but abuse issues in general. They took on a pilot project to deal with abuse, which was really commendable, but they made

it all very pretty and totally took the ugliness of violence away, to the point that I just quit going. I thought, "Well, it's really nice that they're doing something, but maybe it's better they do nothing, if this is the way they handle it." At any rate, I sat and watched this thing unfold for almost a year before I finally said enough is enough. I spoke to several members of the committee and said, "It's time I tell my story." They had covered sexual abuse and childhood sexual abuse but not spousal abuse which they were also supposed to address. One Sunday morning, the congregation was warned that I was going to speak, so that those who didn't feel like hearing wouldn't have to be there. Those with the delicate ears weren't there--I am always very suspect of those who refuse to hear. There's a definite reason why they refuse to hear. One of the doctors who treated me was a member of that church and he wasn't there. His wife was.

I went through the story with them as I did with you. I did not describe my rape, but I did say that it had happened. I talked about how I thought that I had been set up to marry an abuser. I think that is really, really important. I was taught to believe, and was raised in a strict religious home where the man was the head of the home. Granted, the man who was the head of our home was the gentlest person--there was no reason he

couldn't be the head of the home. But we were raised not to question. We were raised to do what we were told. We were raised to be nice. We were raised not to stick up for ourselves. We were raised to accommodate my mother's pain. All our childhood she was emotionally unavailable to us because of her own pain of losing her husband so suddenly after my birth. My uncle was there for me. He was the one who raised me, but, at any rate, we were not raised with any sense of self. We were raised to do what we were told, to be nice to other people even at our own expense. When we said we were sad, we were told, "Don't be sad." When we said we were angry, we were told, "No, it's not nice to be angry."

We were not taught to stick up for ourselves, ever. I came out of my teen years with no sense of myself, of who I was or anything else. Any sense of self that I had --I did have a little--came strictly from my rebellious streak (which was a terrible sin, in their eyes.) I still did my own thing--to the great consternation of my family--and that certainly was not encouraged. There was a little spark of me that got through all this stuck-in-a-box thing. I was raised in a church where all those things were taught. The church was not there for me. The church believed that if I'd fallen on the floor, God was punishing me. I had married this divorced man--a great sin--so God was punishing me. For all 13 years of

my existence that I was married to Mel, I believed God was punishing me, and my biggest prayer through those years was, "God, God, let it stop! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I know I was wrong. Forgive me. Please let it stop." That was my complete connection with God during those years. He was the overall punishing God. So, not only did I not have family support, I had been kicked out of the church, and even God turned his back on me. When I said I had nobody, I mean, I had nobody--and the system--the church system--set me up to have no one.

I found my God, when I was 40. It took me a long time to find out who he was, she was (chuckle), who this being was, and this person is not the God, thank goodness, that they raised me with. It was through this Being's intervention into my life that I found this out, because they [the church] hung me out to dry. I told the church this, and how the church had played into, and continues to play into, abuse, because when we talk about a patriarchal society we set women up for abuse.

My family did a lot of this in ignorance because there was no physical or sexual abuse in our family--none that I'm sure they even knew about. I'm sure abuse was all around them, but they had their blinders on. I don't think they'd have seen it or recognized it had they seen it. The church of today continues to do the same thing, and that's where we have some difficulties.

At any rate, as I spoke to the church about this and described the day I was almost killed. I had their attention. It was very, very quiet. There were about 25 people there, and at the end of it each one came up and either shook my hand or hugged me or just cried and cried. Later one of them who had been abused as a child said, "I went home and I cried the whole afternoon, for you."

Somebody cried for me--isn't that something. Somebody recognized that I had pain, even though I had hidden it so well all of those years--spent so much of my physical energy holding it. To speak that day was very difficult; it took me two days to feel better physically, after going through that with the church. But I was glad I did it. And I felt that, someone had said, "Yes, you have pain." They were sorry that I had been hurt. I am much better now, but still my self-esteem is about two inches high.

I can look back and see all the things I've accomplished, but it does not compute. My accomplishments don't make me feel better about myself. Work is just what I do. It's what I do to stop my pain, and, of course, because I need to eat. My children need to eat. Having my suffering validated has happened very, very seldom in my life, and it is so good when that does happen.

POSTSCRIPT: Not long after the completion of Marilyn's participation in this study, her second marriage ended for good and Mel committed suicide after raping a woman in another province.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEVELOPMENT OF PREVENTIVE THEMES FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"I wonder where I'd be if I hadn't had that strong mother instinct to protect my children. Would I have gone back? . . . Many times, he tried to persuade me to come back. It was just a facade but that's what you wanted to hear because at some level you wanted to be loved or accepted And I can remember crying and crying and crying and wanting to go back, but knowing that I couldn't."

The interview transcripts could be analyzed to elucidate many themes; however, my goal in this research was to consider the possible prevention of femicides (a) within the femicidal attempt and (b) within the entire context of the stories as the women chose to tell them. With this in mind, I analyzed each interview as an independent entity. I then looked at the independent analyses to see if there were common themes regarding prevention in both of them.

Both of the interviews with the intimate femicide survivors took place 10 years after the attempt on their lives. Rena had never told her story from start to finish before, and, for emotional reasons, was unable to read the transcript of her interview for accuracy. She was at a loss to explain her difficulty with it, but stated that it was important to her that her information be included in this research. Marilyn also could not read the transcript of her interview for emotional

reasons, but she was able to scan it, and to read the parts not directly telling the story of her husband's attempt on her life. Marilyn had told her story twice before, though neither telling had involved stating the details of her husband's rapes of her. Neither woman had ever seen a written account of the attacks on their lives, and both reported emotional difficulty seeing their stories in print.

In this chapter, I discuss themes relating to the possible prevention of femicide that emerged from the interviews with Marilyn and Rena. It is important to note that both of these women were strongly influenced by the cultures in which they were raised - namely, a white European Protestant culture. Women who are not part of the dominant culture or who were raised in a different culture may have had different experiences and other themes may have emerged.

Themes

In her interviews, Marilyn addressed the issue of the prevention of intimate femicide in a broad manner. She looked at prevention in terms of what she would have needed from the judicial, medical, family, and church institutions as well as what kind of community support would have been helpful. Within these headings, I consider what could have reduced her risk within the

femicidal attack on her, and what factors kept her tied to a violent man.

Rena's interviews centered more on prevention relating to the judicial system, the church, and the family. She touched briefly on the impact of the community and of the medical/counselling professions. These areas will also be the focus of my discussion in this section.

Judicial Interventions

At the time of her attempted murder, the judicial system was involved in Marilyn's life on a number of levels. As Marilyn was in the process of leaving her husband, she had contacted a lawyer in order to protect her rights to property and to ensure her physical safety. The RCMP were involved with Marilyn as charges against Mel were pending as a result of his rape of her earlier that year. The RCMP were again involved with her after Mel tried to kill her.

The attempt on Marilyn's life took place the day after Mel was served with a restraining order from her lawyer's office. He was served approximately six weeks after she left him for what became the last time. At this time Mel was asking for a reconciliation but, in the face of her refusal, he attacked and raped her. Prior to the attempt on her life, and over a three year period, Marilyn had reported ongoing violence against her to her

lawyer, and had been to the hospital for a rape protocol. However, her lawyer still failed to realize the seriousness of the violence against her. In the interests of getting her "the best possible settlement," he, unwittingly, may have put her at further risk. Mel believed that Marilyn's leaving him, a 50/50 financial settlement, a restraining order (served the day before), and two charges of sexual assault against his wife were grossly unfair to him. In holding out for the best possible property settlement, the lawyer prolonged the period of contact between the two, and demonstrated his underestimation of Mel's violence. After the attempt on her life, Mel continued to delay the court proceedings. Procedures in the judicial system allowed him to do this. These delays cost Marilyn financially and emotionally.

RCMP involvement was neutral and remained that way until the day Mel attempted to murder Marilyn. Marilyn found it helpful when the RCMP officer, on duty the day of her attempted murder, worked collaboratively with her on whether or not to proceed with criminal charges against her husband. His focus was on her safety as well as on which laws were broken. For three months, he explored with her what kind of a jail sentence Mel would probably receive, and what would likely happen when Mel was released. Marilyn was given information, felt included in the decision about the laying of charges, and

felt that her opinion and safety mattered. For her, this was healing. Finally, Marilyn and the RCMP decided not to press charges.

Other than the follow-up by the individual officer, there was no follow-up offered Marilyn through the judicial system.

Like Marilyn, Rena was in the process of separating when her husband tried to kill her.

Prior to the attempt on her life, Rena was involved with the judicial system as she had retained a lawyer to protect her interests in their property and to pursue a divorce. Even though the violence had gone on for years, the police were never involved in Rena's life until after he tried to kill her. The attempt on her life began a campaign of terror against Rena that continues, in a somewhat muted fashion, to this day. "Because he will still stalk me, and he will stalk the kids, and he never lets go of anything he ever had, although he doesn't want it."

RCMP were involved again after he threatened to kill Rena, one of her children, and her parents. Mark was never arrested even though he had breached his restraining order and was clearly dangerous.

Rena's experiences with the police, both City and RCMP, caused her to lose faith in them.

Within the judicial system, the interviews with Marilyn and Rena demonstrated the tendency of lawyers, police officers, and judges to minimize the violence against them and to under-react to it by moving too slowly. Individual peace officers were unwilling to file charges against Rena's husband, and the men's infractions of the law were treated lightly. For example, although Rena's husband stalked her, threatened to kill her, and broke into her home, all he ever received was a restraining order which was never adequately enforced. Marilyn ultimately chose not to pursue charges. She felt that Mel's sentence would be too short to ensure her safety and, after he was released from jail, her risk of being killed by him would increase. Neither woman felt the judicial system could protect them. The problem is multi-layered. Although legislation determines what is criminal, crown prosecutors and police officers exercise individual discretion as to when charges proceed.

Church/Divine Intervention

Marilyn believes that she survived the attack on her life by her husband because of divine intervention. When she was ready to commit suicide, she asked God for a sign, and Peter came along. When Mel thought he was out of time and had no choice but to kill her, she turned back the hands of the clock and Mel accepted that, even though he saw her move the hands of the clock.

Although the church abandoned her before, during, and after her marriage, Marilyn felt that God was there. She was held by God and given strength by God. She questioned why she was spared and others were not, but felt that it was for a purpose even though she does not yet understand what that purpose is. God gave her the strength to behave in ways that Mel did not expect her to behave and this made it more difficult for him to kill her. When Marilyn realized that her calmness and failure to show fear threw Mel off balance and made him less certain of his course of action, she cultivated that behaviour and refused to respond to, or to address, his threats.

She went on to state, however, that organized religion failed her on many levels. Mel was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and had to be on medication in order to control his mental illness. After their last separation, Mel's sister told him that she had prayed for him and that he was healed. After that he went off his medication and into the psychotic episode during which he almost killed Marilyn. The church failed to confront Mel on his behaviour, and never asked Marilyn for her side of the story.

A few years ago, Marilyn attended a church that became involved in women's abuse issues. The church sponsored both a workshop and an abuse project but the

project ended up seriously minimizing the ugliness of violence. Marilyn finally confronted the committee on their approach and said it was time she told her story. Marilyn then spoke to the congregation about how she thought that the church had helped to set her up to marry an abuser. The church supported her husband as head of the house and left her with the sense that the violence against her was because she was not submissive enough to him. The church did not, however, hold him accountable for his violence.

Marilyn stated that she faces an ongoing spiritual struggle as a result of her experience of almost being murdered--"One of my spiritual struggles is why one is spared and one is not . . . and why some struggle and some don't."

Like Marilyn, Rena credits divine intervention with saving her life in the actual attempt, and believes that the church set her up to be abused and failed her after the attempt on her life.

At the same time as Rena credits God with saving her life, she assigns the organized church some responsibility for how she ended up a long-term victim in a violent relationship. "You're to be submissive to your mate. So, however you learnt that, whether it be in your home or through the church, I somehow thought I had to please him . . . my faith played a part in that."

Yet while Rena felt destroyed by a lack of support from her church, an individual within the church helped her to sustain her faith because he was there at the level of her need.

In fact, Rena met her husband through a church youth group. His family image was that of a "wonderful, Christian family" and her family supported their relationship the whole two years that they dated before they married.

Rena also talked about how her faith in God helped her cope after the separation. Even though her ex-husband stalked her, she felt safer outside of the marriage and believed that she was given an abundance of strength and peace from God.

Both Marilyn and Rena identified their childhood church rearing as part of being socialized to believe that the man was the head of the house and it was a woman's role to be submissive. Even though neither woman completely accepted those teachings, they stated that these beliefs affected their willingness to stay with abusive mates. Both women also reported that they could not count on help from the churches they attended. They felt that they had failed as good Christian women. They felt judged and unsupported by their churches.

Both women, however, stated that they had a relationship with God which was different from their

relationship with the church. They both felt saved by God. God had intervened in the femicidal assaults against them and they credited divine intervention with their survival. Both women also identified ongoing spiritual struggles around the fact that they survived these assaults when other women were murdered, and struggled to understand the meaning and purpose of their survival.

Medical Interventions

Marilyn was involved with medical and mental health professionals before, during, and after the attempt on her life.

Before the attack on her life Marilyn went to see her doctor regularly but he did not ask her what was going on at home. When he was informed about the violence, he did not tell her about shelters or other services for battered women. Neither did her doctors state that his behaviour was wrong, rather, they asked her what she had tried to do to placate him.

By late 1978, Mel was seeing psychiatrists. They knew about his violence but the focus was on Mel's headaches, his childhood, and his illness; his violence against Marilyn was never addressed.

Early within the femicidal attack, Marilyn defined Mel as sick rather than violent. She did this by saying "We'll go see your doctor . . . then you know, it'll be

okay." This act may very well have saved her life as he would accept her talking to him about his being ill, but he would not accept her confrontation of his violence.

Marilyn did get Mel to the hospital, finally, and here the failure of the medical profession to deal effectively with him prolonged her ordeal by at least one half day. The doctor who finally admitted him failed to realize the seriousness of what had happened as she referred to the attempt on Marilyn's life as a "rather romantic episode."

Finally, Marilyn and her children had contact with mental health professionals after the attack. Here, too, the system failed her. She was told her children were bright, everything was fine. She knew it wasn't. Everything they had, had been destroyed by their father. Only recently has Marilyn found a counsellor who understands wife assault. As a result, she is presently processing and working through her experiences.

Other than the attempt on her life, Rena never went for medical help as a result of her husband's violence against her. This assault left her with permanent damage to her neck and spine. She did, however, pursue counselling and found that a helpful experience. Counselling helped Rena gather the courage to stay out of her relationship and, later, to heal from the violence she'd suffered.

Rena and Marilyn had very different experiences with the medical system. While Marilyn had a lot of contact with doctors and psychiatrists prior to the attempt on her life, Rena had limited contact with the medical profession and significant contact with one psychologist.

Over the years Marilyn had seen many doctors about various symptoms, some directly related to the violence (bruises), some indirectly related (vague aches and pains with no known physical cause). Doctors consistently failed to ask her about her home life or to ask questions about possible violence against her. Even when informed about the violence against her, they failed to make her safety a primary focus of treatment. Marilyn was never informed about shelters, nor told that the violence against her was wrong. The focus was on helping Mel get better.

Within the femicidal assault itself, medical professionals failed to offer Marilyn essential safety. After managing to get Mel and herself to the hospital emergency, even when doctors knew about the violence against her, they left her alone with, and responsible for, him and failed to recognize that she was calm because she was in shock.

After the destruction of their home, Marilyn took her children for counselling and here, too, helpers failed to adequately recognize and address the impact of

the violence and of her attempted murder on the children.

Rena's primary contact with helpers was after her attempted murder. She saw a psychologist who recognized and validated her pain. He recognized her husband as an abusive man and recognized the effects of his violence on Rena. Rena recommends counselling for anyone. However, she too, did not report doctors asking about the state of her marriage.

Family Factors

Until the final assault on her, Marilyn did not tell her family about the violence against her. She did, however, use her family to protect her children from seeing the violence as much as possible.

To this day, Marilyn expresses regret that the violence kept her from being the kind of parent she wanted to be. Not only was Marilyn not able to be there for her children, she was also a witness and unwilling participant to their abuse and neglect.

Mel used Marilyn's family as a vehicle of his control. Because he had "promised" to kill them, should she leave or tell about the violence, Marilyn was silenced until she reached the point where death was preferable to living the way that she was.

At the same time, Marilyn's family of origin contributed to her socialization as a woman who "should" be submissive and yield authority to her husband. They

interfered in and contributed to the end of a relationship Marilyn had been involved in earlier, and believed in their right to do so as they were in a position of authority over her. Further, they supported the idea of the man as the head of the family and withdrew their support from her when she decided to marry Mel against their wishes. These actions by her family supported patriarchy and hierarchy as the "right" system.

In trying to reflect on the factors that led her to stay with a violent man, Rena also looked at her family. She stated that her role in the family was to be a people-pleaser, and when she tried to please her husband she became a doormat. Rena's family's acceptance of her husband and approval of her husband was a factor in her staying.

After her separation, however, Rena's family, especially her parents, were very supportive of her and this enabled her to gain back some of the strength that she'd lost.

Perception of the family, from Rena's perspective, also affected and continues to affect her ex-husband. He is now estranged from his second wife, but he stalks both of them. Because she was his first wife, he blames her for the problems in his life--"if you ever hear him, it's me that has caused this whole chain of events to happen."

One of Rena's ongoing concerns is what impact witnessing being victimized by violence had on her children. In fact it was to his children, that Rena's ex-husband admitted his intention to kill her. Rena's children have had to live with this knowledge in the face of his subsequent breaking into their home and stalking of both them and their mother. Rena's children still live with the fear that he could kill her.

Both women described being raised in non-violent families, who nonetheless, ascribed to the rightness of a patriarchal society. They spoke of being trained to be submissive, and to respect the man as the head of the house. Both women went on to state that they believed this patriarchal structure helped set them up to enter into, and to stay in, abusive relationships.

Community Factors

Marilyn reported that her safety, while living with her violent husband, and her healing after she left him were affected by the community she had contact with, and the community she was allowed to develop.

Marilyn began to find her way out of the violence that she lived in, the first time that someone in her community knew about the violence against her. "Because when somebody knew, it was the first connection."

Marilyn went on to state how this same neighbour spared her from some assaults--by his presence because

Mel would never hit her in front of anyone, and by his running interference when he felt the tension building. This was the same neighbour who showed up in time to prevent her from suicide.

In another circumstance, a neighbour who didn't even know about the violence but who was around a lot "was kind of my safety net, in that if he showed up then I didn't have to worry about Mel beating me." As she was a gregarious person, Marilyn stated that Mel had to work hard to isolate her. "We never stayed more than two years anywhere until we moved back to my hometown. And that was also his undoing, because little by little I was able to grab onto supports and support systems that I hadn't had."

Marilyn's story illustrates, in a number of ways, the importance of the social community in which she lived. When someone outside the family knew about the violence, the terrible power of secret shame began to break down as that neighbour tried to protect her without blaming her or confronting him.

As she developed a support network, people were around more and helped, both to contain his violence, and to change her opinions about herself. When Marilyn described her role with a particular board, she stated that she could feel herself returning to herself and becoming stronger. This sense of self and strength were

essential to her decision to leave the relationship, which contradictorily placed her at peril in that final assault against her. What would have happened had a community of people confronted Mel about his violence and supported him in changing it? What would have happened had anyone discussed with her, and those important to her, the true danger? What would have happened if a person who had seen him hit his first wife, had told Marilyn about his violence? Would that have prevented the attack on her life? Would that have facilitated his ending his violence?

No one knew about the violence that Rena lived with until after she separated from Mark. People had occasionally asked her about her bruises but she shrugged it off. Part of Rena's difficulty in disclosing the violence had to do with her husband's standing in the community. He was a well-respected and wealthy businessman. Their public appearance as a family was so discrepant with their private lives that she did not think she would be believed.

Rena was at a friend's home when her ex-husband tried to kill her. She believes the presence of her friends saved her life that day.

After her separation from Mark, Rena found a new community that helped to keep her safe. "I did have a really good older neighbour and his wife and they would

watch out for me. They even sat up some nights and watched to make sure he wasn't coming."

Rena also reported establishing a small community of friends and family who knew about the violence and who saw through Mark's "nice guy" facade. This circle of people formed the support network that facilitated Rena's emotional healing.

Both women described being helped by people in the community after the assault on their lives--people who helped keep them safe and that accepted them without judgement. Some neighbours watched their homes and reported when they saw people around their residences.

Both women also reported being isolated from their communities while they were in their violent marriages. This isolation was critical as neither woman's husband would assault her in the presence of other people.

Rena described feeling that the community would not believe her because of the high standing of her husband in their community. Others who saw evidence of the violence never confronted her about the stories she made up to explain the finger bruises on her arms. Perhaps they preferred not to "know" about the violence.

Marilyn stated that she began to find her way out of her violent marriage after a neighbour let her know that he knew about the violence against her and did not judge her. This, combined with her return to a community in

which she had a support network, began to break the stronghold of shame that the violence had created in her, and to give her back her own sense of strength and self.

Both Rena and Marilyn stressed the importance of outside intervention in helping women to escape and heal from violent relationships and in the general prevention of femicides. These interventions are crucial because of "the system of isolation that abusers set up" (Marilyn, 1994).

Marilyn stated that anyone could intervene, but because of the isolating behaviour of abusers, the only person a woman might still have contact with would be her doctor. Doctors, therefore, are in a unique position to offer help. Marilyn wants doctors to ask women about their marriages, to ask questions about violence, and when informed about violence, to tell women about shelter and counselling services available to them and to make the woman's physical safety a primary focus of treatment. If a woman is unable to accept this level of help, Marilyn still wants doctors to tell women who have been assaulted that the violence against them is not their fault, and that they have the right to a violence-free relationship and to leave.

Summary

Common themes about prevention emerged from the interviews with Marilyn and Rena. These themes centered around systemic issues of a number of social institutions--the judicial, the religious, the medical, the family, and the community. All of these levels of society play a role in, what Pence (1988) has named, community collusion in the perpetuation of male violence against women in intimate relationships. The judicial system colluded in the violence by ignoring Mark's stalking and by making sentencing judgments that minimized the impact of the violence. Hence Marilyn's unwillingness to press charges against Mel. The medical system colluded in the violence by not considering Marilyn's battery by Mel as a life-threatening condition and by not planning for her safety. Individuals in both Marilyn's and Rena's communities chose not to see physical evidence (i.e., bruises) of the violence against them. Their families and churches colluded in the violence by socializing them into a level of acceptance of male authority that left them questioning themselves when that male authority was abusive.

Violent men and predators of all kinds have many ways of covering up deviant behaviour. For Rena, the discrepancy between Mark's public image and the reality of his private violence left her feeling that she would

not be believed. The community chose to see and believe his public image. This discrepancy between the public and private life is yet another example of community collusion which clearly operated at all levels and within all social institutions.

CHAPTER SIX

INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

"I dreamt about a woman that I've known since childhood, and I know that she . . . has been abused all the years that she has been married. I dreamt that she called me and said, 'Marilyn, come to my house. I'm leaving John, and I want as many people here as possible when I tell him and when I leave.' I went right over there and there were about five or six of us there to get her safely out of the house. And I thought, this is one weird dream, you know. But obviously the whole thing of abuse has been on my mind a lot lately, and it takes those five or six other people to get a woman safely out."

In this research, I found similar themes between two women who had survived an attempted intimate femicide and 40 women who were murdered. For both women who survived and women who were murdered, failures by the community, the judicial system, and the medical system played a part in allowing the violence against them to go unchecked. In the interviews with women who survived, family of origin and spiritual/religious elements played a role in keeping them in a violent relationship, and in their healing after they left the relationship. Information on family of origin and spirituality was usually not available for those who had been murdered. Members of the community, the judicial system, and the medical system colluded in the violence covertly, through their inaction or failure to consider the woman's safety, or overtly, in their support of patriarchy as right.

According to Radford (1992), there is limited discussion of "woman killing," even among feminists and within feminist research. Femicide is final and depressing. They are the dead, the women who will never experience empowerment because they did not survive. This is a painful and overwhelming truth that can leave us feeling defeated and hopeless. There is also, within many of us, a need to be aware of the impact of what we say and do on those close to the dead woman. According to Sheffield (1989), "[s]exual terrorism is the system by which men and boys frighten, and by frightening, dominate and control women and girls" (p. 483). From this perspective, a dialogue that includes femicide is essential because femicide is at the extreme end of a continuum of male sexual violence, and feminists regard male sexual violence as a form of control central to the continuation of patriarchy.

According to Lerner (1993), patriarchal constructs are built into Western civilization in such a way that they are almost invisible. Patriarchy "gradually institutionalized the rights of men to control and appropriate the sexual and reproductive services of women" (p.3) with no corresponding right on the part of women. Patriarchy incorporated into itself beliefs about the value of men and women in which men were regarded as superior and their superiority was ordained by God. From

this superior position men were responsible to explain the world and to exercise their reason in authority over women. These beliefs profoundly affected the women in this research.

Why do police so often fail to intervene in "domestic" disputes? Why do doctors not ask about physical violence when women come in with vague somatic complaints or physical injuries? Why do neighbours and others who witness a "domestic" dispute fail to intervene or call for help? Why is violence against women in the home so often regarded as a private affair, while violence between strangers is a crime? Each of these questions points towards community collusion in the perpetuation of violence against women in intimate relationships--a community collusion predicated on patriarchy.

How do the findings of this research fit with other research on femicide? To answer this question, I will relate major themes from my research to the literature on intimate femicide.

The Community

For the purposes of this research, the community is made up of the people and their belief systems with whom we have day to day contact. Under this heading I discuss the home as private, women as possessions, and the

historic legitimacy of women as property and subject to men. I recognize that these concepts spring from a Eurocentric perspective and may not adequately address issues of violence in Saskatchewan's aboriginal communities; however, as a non-aboriginal woman, I am not able to address these issues.

Home as Private

The concept of the home as private is central to the inaction of social institutions when violence occurs in families. That the home is regarded as private is reflected in sayings such as, "the government has no business in the bedrooms of the nation," and "a man's home is his castle." Sayings such as these affirm "the sanctity of the home against unwanted intrusion, and it is to be breached only in the direst of circumstances" (Bean, 1992, p.19). Yet in this research, even "in the direst of circumstances," individual members of the community refused to breach "the sanctity of the home." Had someone intervened, it is possible that nine women killed by intimate partners would still be alive. Neighbours or other witnesses failed to intervene or call police because they regarded violence toward an intimate female partner as "none of their business," or regarded verbal threats to kill as blowing off steam. Both women survivors talked about meeting people who chose not to see, and not to know about the violence against them, by

accepting lame excuses for their bruises. They did not want to believe "upstanding" members of the community would beat their wives.

Women as Property

The sanctity of the home reflects a male perspective. Women are objects who are to be possessed, conquered, and subjugated. According to Daly and Wilson (1992), women are at the greatest risk of intimate femicide when they initiate separation and divorce. That was certainly true for some women in this research who were killed when they tried to end the relationship. Others were killed when they questioned their partners' actions or behaviour or refused their partners' requests. The women were not allowed to stand on an equal footing with their male partners. The attempted murders of both survivors occurred after their final separations from their violent partners.

"Men continue to feel entitled to, and responsible for, the control of their wives personal assets, including money that women either earn or bring to the relationship" (Bean, 1992, p. 19). A woman's decision-making power, even over her own money, is often subject to his review. "He feels entitled to do this. Nor does she see anything extraordinary about what he does" (p. 20). One of the women in this research was killed after refusing to give her partner money. She had borrowed

money from her father to pay off debts her partner had incurred on their behalf but without her consent. When she refused to give control of her money to her partner he murdered her.

To this day, the home is regarded as a private place and as a man's castle in which a woman and her property belong to the man. These perceptions of the home have resulted in systematic non-intervention when women are at risk of intimate male violence. The same is not true of non-intimate male violence. In fact, intervention is more likely to occur when others regard the assailant as a stranger.

Historic Legitimacy of Women as Property and Subject to Men

According to Ellen Pence (1984) "in this century wife beating was the legal right of a husband. It was a clearly legitimate way for a man to assert his legal and presumed moral authority over his wife" (p. 478). As late as the 1970's adultery by a woman was considered a justifiable reason under the law for the committal of intimate femicide. "Killing rage", in response to his wife's adultery was considered the act of a "reasonable man," but the reverse was never true. Daly & Wilson (1992) attribute this behaviour to the concept of "male sexual proprietariness"--the tendency of men to think of women as sexual and reproductive property. Intimate

femicides are often precipitated by a man's suspicion or knowledge of his partner's infidelity, by a man's knowledge or fear of the woman's leaving, or by his perception of her real or imagined rejection of him in some way. Several of the women in this research were murdered by intimate males for real or imagined affairs; eight were murdered over separation or suspicions of separation from the partner. Another eight women were murdered for "going against" their partners in some way. Campbell (1992, in Radford & Russell) refers to killings of women "going against" their partners, as murders related to male dominance issues.

Within the violent relationship itself, it is easy to see how notions of male dominance and of woman as property contribute to violence against women. It is also clear how a family institution, mired in the constructs of patriarchy, socializes men to be dominant and women to be submissive. It is less clear how social constructions of male dominance affect responses of individuals within the community, and interventions by judicial or medical institutions.

Judicial System Concerns

What is the political significance of femicide? According to Radford (1992), femicide is a form of capital punishment which affects victims, families,

friends, and most importantly, women as a group. Every publicized rape by a stranger reminds women they are not safe in public spaces. Every story of a woman murdered by an intimate male partner or ex-partner reminds women that they are not safe in private spaces, or that they are "lucky" because their man is not violent. Obscene phone calls also "remind women and girls that they can be intruded upon by known or unknown males at any time or in any place" (Sheffield, 1989, p. 488). Because of these constant reminders, personal events in the lives of women take on a politically powerful impact.

In courts, femicide victims are often scrutinized, found wanting (bad women) against idealized male constructions of femininity (good women), and held responsible for their own killings. The male killers in this research frequently cited a woman's shortcoming as the reason for the killing. In the court room the defense often relied on one eye-witness--the accused--and his version of the victim and the killing. Rarely did the prosecution present witnesses to give a rebuttal of the killer's version of the victim (Radford, 1982).

In the court room setting, femicides are constructed as the actions of isolated men, rather than as the extreme end of a continuum of male sexual violence. However, the reality is that the existence of femicide terrorizes women and helps to secure "the gendered power

relations of patriarchy" (Radford, 1992, p. 353). How does this happen? How is the judicial system complicit in the engendering of power? According to Mahon (1995), a case study in Nova Scotia revealed that unless a man was charged for assaulting a woman, related charges were not linked to a pattern of relationship violence. For example, charges such as damage to property (usually hers), threats to kill, or stalking, were rarely connected to or seen as a part of a man's pattern of violence against his partner. As a result, police tended to modify their response, and probation officers failed to adequately consider the safety of the woman in their interventions. According to Mahon, probation officers often did not know the offence they were dealing with (i.e., damage to property) was related to violence against an intimate partner. In addition, police officers and prosecutors exercised considerable individual discretion regarding the laying of charges when the assault involved a "domestic" dispute.

Of the 40 femicides reviewed in this research, judicial system failure was evident, at some level, in four femicides. In one case, a woman's request to have her boyfriend's parole revoked, because she was afraid of him, went unheeded. In one community, residents were so terrified by the killer and his family that they failed to call police or to report the killer's partner missing.

Neither the woman, nor members of her community, perceived the police as able to protect her, or them, from the killer and his family. In another case, miscommunication between two police forces led to the release of a man, even though police had a tape recording on which he threatened to kill his estranged wife and described a thwarted plan to murder her. Mahon (1995) described similar problems in communication between Nova Scotia police forces. In yet another case, an officer accompanied a woman to her home to pick up some belongings with the goal of preventing an assault; however, he failed to even keep her or her killer within his line of vision or within earshot. She was murdered. In all of these instances, members of the judicial system failed to adequately assess and address the danger the women were in from their intimate partners. This fits with contentions by feminists that "the powerful institutions of patriarchal society, namely, the law, the judiciary, the police and the media have largely denied the existence [and the ongoing threat] of femicide" (Radford 1992, p. 351).

According to a British Columbia report on violence, the most significant barrier "women faced was the indifference of some members of the criminal justice system to their specific needs . . . an indifference many of the women perceived to be the result of racist, sexist

and homophobic attitudes" (Light & Rivkin, 1994, p.4). Even when police support was reported to be adequate or appropriate, support from crown counsel was frequently deemed inadequate.

The original impetus of the women's movement was to bring the issue of violence against women in relationships forward as a socio-political rather than simply a personal issue. Ironically, it is the acceptance of the legitimacy of a justice system response that has resulted in the dilemma of either pursuing a pro-charge policy regardless of the wishes of the victim or empowering a woman by enabling her to make her own choices about how to proceed. Feminist values about personal empowerment come to a head-on collision with the requirement for a collective response on the part of the state. (Light & Rivkin, 1994, p. 12)

A dilemma exists for both women and the state. For example, even when charges are laid, the judicial process moves exceedingly slowly in its confrontation of violent men.

Until women agree that criminal justice system intervention is the most appropriate option for them, or until they believe that the system can provide them with greater ongoing safety than they can attain through nonintervention, many will continue to seek police protection to stop the immediate violence but will not support the laying of charges. (Light & Rivkin, 1994, p. 17).

The laying of charges can actually increase the risk of femicide. According to Marilyn, one of the women who survived an attempted murder, her husband had lost her, his wife, had rape and assault charges pending against him, and felt he had nothing left to lose by murdering

her. Neither survivor of attempted intimate femicide interviewed for this research believed that the judicial system could, then or now, protect them from their violent partners.

Medical Institutions

Members of medical institutions, like members of the judicial system, often failed to perform an adequate "duty of care" when the female victim of violence was married or living common-law. One doctor refused to perform a rape protocol after Marilyn was raped by her husband. Another doctor who knew about the violence asked what "she" had done to try and stop it. Still others regarded Marilyn's partner's psychiatric state as the important issue, and disregarded evidence that she was in danger from him. Warshaw (1989) "examined the medical records of encounters between medical staff (nurses and physicians) and women whose injuries were highly indicative of having been caused by abuse." She found that structural constraints "led not only to nondetection and nonintervention but, more important, to a lack of receptiveness and response by health care providers" (p. 506) to issues that are vital to the life and well-being of battered women. A battered woman's safety was not part of the discharge plan. In no other situation would a physician "discharge a patient from the emergency room with a potentially life-threatening

condition" (p. 510). Warshaw's research took place in a hospital where staff had received education on battering and had developed a protocol for dealing with it; however, the majority of time, the protocol was not followed. She described medical encounters in which "what is most significant is not seen" and in which a woman's initial attempts to disclose the violence were not attended to. "Together, the doctor, nurse, and patient construct a medical history . . . that extracts an event . . . from its status as an event" (Warshaw, 1989, p. 513). The battered woman is reduced to medical symptoms describing the impact of his fist on her body parts but in which it is never said that it was her boyfriend's fist that caused her "blunt face trauma." In Marilyn's case, no one even examined her for trauma or asked her what had happened to her, even though Mel said he wanted to kill her.

Therapists and counsellors have played a similar role in rendering the battery of women invisible. In their offices, "it is never spoken that a crime has been committed, much less that he has committed it" (Kaufman, 1992, p. 239). This was certainly Marilyn's experience as psychiatrists and counsellors focussed on Mel's pain, Mel's childhood, Mel's headaches. Amongst the 40 femicides, two can be directly attributed to

psychiatrists' or therapists' failures to act on indications FROM THE MAN that he was dangerously violent.

Racism

Racism compounds the complexities of femicide and shapes the experiences of women of colour whose experience of violence is rooted in a history of colonialism and imperialism (Radford, 1992). It is impossible to know what level of violence aboriginal women experienced in intimate relationships or if patriarchy operated before First Nations contact with the Europeans; however, the aboriginal women in this research were deeply affected by patriarchal and racist beliefs. Eight First Nations women were killed by Caucasian men. Of these killings three were intimate femicides. In at least one instance, the killer directly, and on tape, belittled and humiliated his wife because of her race. In addition, although three First Nations women, in this research, were murdered by a serial killer, little was reported in The StarPhoenix during the preliminary hearing of the killer and no mention was made of the killer's race. In contrast, during the same time period, the same newspaper carried numerous articles daily on the American trial of O.J. Simpson, in which a black man was alleged to have killed his Caucasian ex-wife. "Aggressive acts of violence coupled with the murder of

Indian women off the reservation often go unrecognized in mainstream news reporting. When women of colour are killed, little attention is paid to these crimes in the news media and we hardly hear about them in comparison with femicidal murders of white middle-class women" (Singer, 1992). Only three Caucasian women were murdered by First Nations killers. Of these killings two were intimate femicides.

Media Reporting on Femicides as a Reflection of Racist and Male Perspectives

According to Chris Domingo (1992), violence against women, and femicide in particular, is masked by the very definitions mainstream journals and media use to describe it. Domingo cited the example of "serial killer" who is "generally defined as a person who kills a succession of victims" (p. 195). A more precise and honest definition, however, would state that a serial killer is "in almost all cases a white man who kills a succession of victims, usually women (pp. 195-196)." Usual descriptions of serial killers mask issues of race and gender. Between 1978 and 1980, 26 African American males were murdered in Atlanta. These murders were called the "Atlanta Child Murders" even though the ages of the victims ranged between 7 and 27 years of age. During that same time period, 38 girls and women were murdered in Atlanta. The

majority of these victims (32) were of African-American descent and four were white. "The femicides remained ignored and unsolved" even though all were killed in the same suburban county in which the men's bodies had been found. The failure of the media to report these killings illustrates the complicity of racism and sexism in ignoring the murder of women (Russell & Ellis, 1992).

According to McNeill (1992), wife-killers are often presented in the media as tragic heroes. Headlines such as "Break-Up Couple United in Death" fail to acknowledge that it was his wish to be united in death and not hers. In my research, on the day of the funeral of a woman murdered by an estranged partner, the first page headline in The StarPhoenix read "Suspected killer may have 'cared too much' for his kids", and quoted sources who said he might have killed his wife (and then himself) because he loved his kids too much to let her raise them. There was never a headline that presented her struggle heroically. Had reporters interviewed other sources the headline might have read, "Murdered woman loses heroic battle for safety from violent husband." The full horror of these murders are muted when the media reports his declarations of love, yet fails to report her terror and her attempts to end the violence. During my research no headlines chronicled the heroism of the wife's futile attempts to escape a man who would not let her leave.

Summary

Women are warned of the dangers of going out alone, especially after dark, and effectively told that public space is men's space. In this research, for women murdered by non-intimates, the motive most frequently cited in police reports was "sex crime." These femicides were usually reported on the front page of The Star-Phoenix (Saskatoon) and gave the reader the impression that these were the most common type of femicide; however, the most lethal place for the women was in their homes, and the person most lethal to them was a present or former intimate male partner.

Perceptions of the home as private and of women as men's property are deeply rooted in the history of Western civilization. These perceptions affect the willingness of people in the community to intervene when there is violence against women in the home. Neighbours and family rarely call police when a wife assault is in progress. Bystanders are less likely to call police when they believe a woman's assailant is her intimate partner and not a stranger. On those occasions when police are called, officers exercise considerable individual discretion in making decisions to file or not to file charges. When men assaultive to intimate partners are convicted, sentences given by judges tend to be minimal even when the woman is murdered in the assault. Medical

personnel are often reluctant to become involved in marital disputes and rarely design medical interventions adequately taking into account battered women's safety. Counsellors and therapists usually fail to confront the fact that a crime has been committed by the man in their office against the woman. Media reports tend to treat intimate femicide as commonplace and unimportant. At the same time, they tend either to treat intimate killers in a sympathetic light or to portray them as beast-like, having little in common with ordinary men. Further, men who are violent to intimate female partners often have ways of hiding their violence--showing a benign and respected face in public and revealing their violence only in the privacy of their homes. All of these factors cohere together to build a community collusion that supports violence against women in the home and that makes it difficult for women to speak the violence they have suffered. The effect of this community collusion is magnified and compounded by racism, making it even more difficult for aboriginal women and women of colour to disclose and confront the violence against them.

Femicide, both outside and inside the home, creates an atmosphere of fear, and effectively maintains and enforces the oppression of women.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The women at greatest risk for intimate femicide in this research were not employed outside the home, were between 26 and 30 years old, and lived with an unemployed male with a criminal record. There were more likely to be witnesses to her killing than in non-intimate femicides, and these witnesses were less likely to call police than witnesses to assaults by strangers. Aboriginal women were equally at risk for both intimate and non-intimate femicide; however, Caucasian women were primarily at risk for intimate femicide.

I believe nine of 23 intimate and one of 17 non-intimate femicides could have been prevented. I reviewed these femicides intensively and came up with a number of recommendations aimed at preventing femicide in Saskatchewan.

Recommendations for Public Policy

1. Witnesses (auditory or visual) to domestic assault must be compelled to report these assaults to police or to face contempt of court charges. Four women were killed after adult witnesses failed to report an assault in progress.

2. Police must be educated and compelled to regard reporting of intimate assaults by women as evidence of possible lethal relationships. In 43% of intimate femicides there had been prior police involvement. (Inconsistent reporting of prior police involvement in the femicide files means this figure may actually be higher).
3. Communication links within and between police forces must be improved as communication failure directly contributed to the death of at least one woman.
4. Police and other members of the judicial system need to take a woman-centred approach to women's safety. They need to work cooperatively and collaboratively with abused women, to consult with them regarding mechanisms to ensure their safety, and to discuss with them the limitations of the law in providing them with safety. In the only incidence in which a woman reported positive police contact, the officer had worked collaboratively with her regarding her need for safety.
5. Advocates for victims, counsellors, police, and the medical community need to work intensively with women at risk for femicide to help them mobilize a community response which can help keep them safe. Both women who survived an attempted intimate femicide reported that their community (i.e.,

- neighbours, friends, etc.) helped keep them safe.
6. Nearly two-thirds of the killers were under the age of 35. A more concerted effort must be made to educate young men, adolescents, and boys about the risks of violent behaviour, and to work at changing cultural beliefs that allow violence against women to go unchecked. Education must occur formally and informally as all social institutions currently collude in the violence. All social institutions must join together and confront violence against women if Canada is to stop femicide.
 7. Any fears of being killed expressed by women in violent relationships must be taken seriously by parole boards, police, judges, lawyers, health professionals, and the general public. Some women who were later murdered by partners had expressed their concerns to the Parole Board, doctors or nurses, police, lawyers, friends, and taxi drivers. Inaction or inadequate follow-up was the most frequently noted response by all of the above. Perhaps it is time to treat jokes about killing wives in the same way as jokes about blowing up airplanes--the utterer of the threat has to prove there was no ill intent and that he is not a danger to his female partner.

8. A high prevalence of criminal records amongst perpetrators of intimate femicide suggests a need to consider any charges as an indication of possible relationship violence. An even stronger connection to relationship violence needs to be made when the charges, often not specifically charges of partner assault are, nonetheless, connected to his pattern of violence against her. Charges such as disturbing the peace, destruction of property, and threats to kill must go further and state that the perpetrator was disturbing the peace of his ex-partner, destroying the property of his partner or estranged partner, or threatening to kill his wife or her family. Later charges need to reflect past infractions against the same person. Without this link in place, probation officers may be unaware that the offender has a history of relationship violence and may fail to consider partner assault in making plans to rehabilitate an offender.

Areas for Further Study

In the process of conducting this research, I identified many areas for further study. More interviews need to be conducted with women who survived attempted intimate femicides, in particular, attempted intimate femicides that initially appeared to be suicide attempts

or accidents. During the course of my years as a counsellor in a women's shelter, I met at least two women whose partners attempted to murder them by making it look as though they had committed suicide. Other stories, similar to those of Marilyn and Rena, were told by women who feared they would be killed in drowning, car, or other "accidents." Is there a way to identify intimate femicides that appear to be accidents or suicides?

Research is needed to learn about which interventions are preventive and which interventions actually increase the risk of intimate femicide. More research is required to determine whether divorce from violent intimate male partners results in increased security for their female partners, and if so, how this happens. In addition we need to begin to understand why femicide rates increase as male homicide rates increase and why there are regional differences in these rates.

Little is known about how women heal their sexuality after having been victimized by men through their sexuality and because of their gender. More study is needed to fully understand the healing process women like Marilyn and Rena need to go through.

I did not discuss the spirituality of the survivors; however, their spirituality was clearly important to them for explaining how they survived. Their spirituality was also seen by them as central to their coming to terms

with the violence they had been subjected to. Much more study could be initiated in this area, including research on the development of their image of God.

My Experience

I spent over 200 hours reading femicide files. After each week of reading, I would wake up to discover I had cold sores. Near the end, I got a cold sore every time I read more than a chapter of my thesis. I became increasingly reluctant to review my work and needed to take longer and longer breaks from it. Since April of 1995, when I read my first set of femicide files, I have been unable to watch television programs or movies that depict violence or whose topic is abuse. I prefer comedies and keep my recreational time really light. I also cry more easily and fear for my daughter who is 15.

The process of reviewing 40 femicide files was an onerous, and at times, overwhelming experience. Often, after a day of reading these files I would leave angry, and with images of violent death in my head. Some of these images still haunt me. This is most true of those femicides which I felt were preventable. In my head I carry these women's unacknowledged pleas for help; pleas that may have been heard but which were ignored.

Summary

It is difficult to summarize the deaths of 40 women and still maintain the integrity of each femicide; however, intimate femicides followed a pattern that, I believe, make them more preventable than other murders. Aboriginal women, women not employed outside the home, women who had prior contact with police about the violence against them, women living common-law, separating women, and women who defied their partners were more likely to be murdered. Rarely was the violent incident in which they were murdered the first act of violence against them by their killers. Too often, neighbours or relatives of the victim or the killer knew about the violence and did nothing. Typically, the killings of these women were extremely brutal and took place over a prolonged period of time, sometimes for days. Rarely were the killings the crimes of passion they were portrayed to be, rather they were the culmination of years of violence by one man against one woman. Far too often, social institutions within the community colluded in hiding or ignoring his violence against her. In order to eliminate femicide, those same community institutions need to join together to confront and end men's violence against women.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, L. & Burns, R. (1989). Research in the classroom: The study of teachers, teaching and instruction. Oxford, England: Pergamon Press.
- Atkinson, P. (1992). The ethnography of a medical setting: Reading, writing, and rhetoric. Qualitative Health Research. 2, 4: 451-474.
- Bean, C. A. (1992). Women murdered by the men they loved. New York: The Haworth Press.
- Bohannon, P. (1960). Patterns of homicide among tribal societies in Africa. In M. Wolfgang (Ed.), Studies in homicide (pp. 211-237). New York: Harper & Row.
- Boyd, N. (1988). The last dance: Murder in Canada. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada, Inc.
- Browne, A. (1987). When battered women kill. London: Collier Macmillan.
- Browne, A., & Williams, K. R. (1989). Exploring the effect of resource availability and the likelihood of female-perpetrated homicides. Law and Society Review, 23, 75-94.
- Campbell (1992). If I can't have you, no one can. In J. Radford & D. Russell (Eds.), Femicide: The politics of woman killing (pp. 99-108). New York: Twayne.
- Crawford, M., & Gartner, R. (1992). Women killing: Intimate femicide in Ontario 1974-1990. Toronto, ON: Women We Honour Action Committee.
- Daly, M., & Wilson, M. (1988). Homicide. New York: Adeline de Gruyter.
- Daly, M., & Wilson, M. (1992). Till Death Do Us Part. In J. Radford & D. Russell (Eds.), Femicide: The politics of woman-killing (pp. 83-98). New York: Twayne.
- Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. (1979). Violence against wives. New York: Free Press.

- Domingo, C. (1992). What the white man won't tell us: Report from the Berkeley clearinghouse on femicide. In J. Radford & D. Russell (Eds.), Femicide: The politics of woman killing (pp. 195-201). New York: Twayne.
- Eichler, (1988). Nonsexist research methods: A practical guide. New York: Routledge.
- Gartner, R., Baker, K., & F. Pampel (1990). Gender stratification and the gender gap in homicide victimization. Social Problems, 37, 593-612.
- Gartner, R., & McCarthy, B. (1991). The social distribution of femicide in urban Canada, 1921-1988. Law and Society Review, 25 (2), 287-311.
- Goetting, A. (1987). Homicidal wives: A profile. Journal of Family Issues, 8 (3), 332-341.
- Goetting, A. (1991). Female victims of homicide: A portrait of their killers and the circumstances of their deaths. Violence and Victims, 6 (2), 159-168.
- Jones, A. (1980). Women who kill. New York: Rinehart & Winston.
- Kaufman, G., Jr. (1992). The mysterious disappearance of battered women in family therapists offices: Male privilege colluding with male violence. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 18 (3), pp. 233-243.
- Lerner, G. (1993). The creation of feminist consciousness. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Light, L., & Rivkin, S. (1994). Power, control and violence in family relationships: The challenges of a justice system response. Paper presented to Today's Families: A Bridge to the Future Conference, B.C. Ministry of Attorney General and Justice Institute of B.C.
- Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mahon, P. (1995). Changing perspectives: A case study of intimate partner homicides in Nova Scotia. St. Francis Xavier University, NS: Family Violence Prevention Division: Health Canada.

- McNeill, S. (1992). Woman killer as tragic hero. In J. Radford & D. Russell (Eds.), Femicide: The politics of woman killing (pp. 178-183). New York: Twayne.
- Merriam, S.B. (1988). Case study research in education: A qualitative approach. San Francisco, Ca.: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Nielsen, J. (1990). Feminist research methods. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press.
- Pence, E. (1988). "Batterer programs: Shifting from community collusion to community confrontation." In P.L. Caesar and L.K. Hamberger (eds.), Treating men who batter: Theory, practice and programs. New York: Springer.
- Pence, E. (1984). Response to Peter Neidig's article: 'Women's shelters, men's collectives and other issues in the field of spouse abuse'. Victimology, 9 (3-4), pp. 477-482.
- Radford, J. (1992). Where do we go from here. In J. Radford & D. Russell (Eds.), Femicide: The politics of woman killing (pp. 351-357). New York: Twayne.
- Radford, J., & Russell, D. E. H. (Eds.). (1992). Femicide: The politics of woman killing. New York: Twayne.
- Russell, D. E. H., & Ellis, C. (1992). Annihilation by murder and by the media: The other Atlanta femicides. In J. Radford & D. Russell (Eds.), Femicide: The politics of woman killing (pp. 161-162). New York: Twayne.
- Sheffield, C. J. (1989). The invisible intruder: Women's experiences of obscene phone calls. Gender and society, 3 (4), pp. 483-488.
- Singer, B. R. (1992). American Indian women killing: A Tewa Native woman's perspective. In J. Radford & D. Russell (Eds.), Femicide: The politics of woman killing (pp. 170-173). New York: Twayne.
- Statistics Canada (Various Years). Homicide in Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Statistics Canada (1993). The violence against women survey. The Daily: Statistics Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Warshaw, C. (1989). Limitations of the medical model in the care of battered women. Gender and Society, 3 (4), pp. 506-517.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Letter from the Coroners Branch



Saskatchewan
Justice

1874 Scarth Street
Regina, Canada
S4P 3V7

November 18, 1993

Ms. Deborah Farden
Graduate Student
University of Saskatchewan
College of Education
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7N 0W0

Dear Ms. Farden:

Further to the letter from Dr. O. Diane Stephenson,
Chief Coroner for the Province of Saskatchewan dated
November 9, 1993 and our recent telephone
conversation.

Please find attached a statistical overview of
femicides in Saskatchewan from 1974 to 1992. As you
will see, information on deaths of this nature from
1988 to 1992 inclusive is more comprehensive in view
of our computerized record keeping which commenced in
1988.

Should you require additional information that this
department may be in a position to supply, please do
not hesitate to advise.

On a personal note, you are wished well in your
research endeavour.

Yours truly,

Roger W. Pick
Administrator
Coroners Branch

ATT:

NCR
 - died in home - began search day of death -
 " outside - " day before + a week after

FEMICIDES IN SASKATCHEWAN

1992 (6 of 26)			
DATE OF DEATH	LOCATION	AGE	PLACE OF DEATH
JAN. 3	FOND DU LAC	21	HOME
* MAR. 21	LOON LAKE INDIAN RES.	26	OUTSIDE OF HOME
JUN. 26 MAR	CUDWORTH	8	HOME
AUG. 16	SASKATOON	28	PUBLIC PLACE
OCT. 10	WADENA	27	HOME
DEC. 22	REGINA	29	PUBLIC PLACE
1991 (7 OF 23)			
MAR. 7	WHITE BEAR INDIAN RES.	38	HOME
MAY 7 *	MONTREAL LAKE	43	HOME
JUL. 12	SASKATOON	32	OUTSIDE HOME
AUG. 21	WEYBURN DIST.	29	OUTSIDE HOME
SEP. 15 *	PRINCE ALBERT	30	OUTSIDE HOME
OCT. 1	REGINA	28	HOME
DEC. 21	SASKATOON	79	HOME
1990 (14 OF 34)			
FEB. 21 *	LLOYDMINSTER	41	HOME
APR. 28	MOOSE JAW	56	HOME
MAY 13	REGINA	51	HOME
MAY 16	SASKATOON	43	HOSPITAL
JUN. 20	NIPAWIN	26	HOME
JUN. 24	REGINA	68	HOME
JUN. 29	SASKATOON	1	HOME
AUG. 12 *	STANLEY MISSION	32	HOME
...2/			

search
 May 6

...2/ (1990)			
✓ AUG. 20	MORTLACK	3	OUTSIDE HOME
✓ SEP. 1	NIPAWIN	33	HOTEL/MOTEL
✓ SEP. 1	BUFFALO NARROWS	20	OUTSIDE HOME
✓ NOV. 5	PRINCE ALBERT DISTRICT	49	HOME
✓ JUL. 20	SASKATOON	58	HOME
✓ DEC. 28	MELFORT	33	HOME
1989 (11 OF 24)			
✓ JAN. 6	SASKATOON	44	OUTSIDE HOME
✓ * APR. 15	JOSEPH BIGHEAD INDIAN RES.	15	HOME
✓ APR. 28	REGINA	48	HOSPITAL
✓ MAY 6	CUMBERLAND HOUSE	N/A 11	OUTSIDE HOME
✓ AUG. 11	PRINCE ALBERT	18	HOME
✓ AUG. 19	KAHKEWISTAHAW INDIAN RES.	20	HOME
✓ OCT. 2	WEYBURN	N/A 4	HOSPITAL
✓ OCT. 22	REGINA	N/A 0	HOME
✓ NOV. 14	ASSINIBOINE INDIAN RES.	44	HOME
✓ NOV. 30	SASKATOON	N/A 0	HOSPITAL
✓ DEC. 14	REGINA	N/A 2	HOME
1988 (6 OF 23)			
FEB.	LARONGE	UNKNOWN	HOME
JUNE	SASKATOON	"	HOME
AUG.	REGINA	"	HOSPITAL
AUG.	MIDDLE LAKE	"	OUTSIDE HOME
SEPT.	SASKATOON	"	HOSPITAL
SEPT.	REGINA	"	HOME

FEMICIDES IN SASKATCHEWAN

1987	5 OF 29
1986	2 OF 20
1985	7 OF 25
1984	6 OF 33
1983	UNAVAILABLE
1982	13 OF 39
1981	17 OF 32
1980	6 OF 27
1979	12 OF 34
1978	9 OF 33
1977	UNAVAILABLE
1976	TOTAL HOMICIDES - 35
1975	TOTAL HOMICIDES - 37
1974	TOTAL HOMICIDES - 35

Appendix B
Data Collection Form

APPENDIX B

CODING SHEET: SASKATCHEWAN FEMICIDES

CASE NUMBER _____ FILE NUMBER _____

DATE OF CRIME _____ DATE OF DEATH _____

TIME OF CRIME _____

VICTIM AGE _____

V. Marital Status _____ Witnesses to Crime _____

V. # of children _____

V. Employment Status _____

V. Job Type _____

V. Years of Education _____

V. Ethnic Group _____

V. Place of Birth _____

V. # of Years in Canada _____

V. Crim. Record _____

V. Psychiatric Trmt/Hosp. _____

V. Counselling/Support _____

V. Alcohol/Drug Use _____

V. Suicide Attempts _____

OFFENDER AGE _____

O. Marital Status _____

O. # of Children _____

O. Employment Status _____ O. Job Type _____

O. Years of Education _____

O. Ethnic Group _____

O. Place of Birth _____

O. # of years in Canada _____
O. Crim Record _____
O. Psychiatric Trmt/Hosp. _____
O. Counselling/Support _____
O. Alcohol/Drug Use _____
O. Suicide _____
O. Prior Threats/Attempts - Suicide _____

Victim-Offender Relationship _____

Prior Violence by O. _____ Prior Threats by O. _____

Prior Violence by V. _____ Prior Threats by V. _____

Police Involvement _____

V. Used Shelter _____ V. Used Other Services _____

Location of Crime _____

Cause of Death _____ Multiple Methods _____

Motive _____

of Victims in Case _____ Sexual Assault of V. _____

Criminal Justice System Response

Charges Laid _____ Conviction _____

Sentencing _____

(Narrative on back)

Appendix C

"F" Division RCMP Fax Approving Study

Commanding Officer "F" Division

A.OIC Access to Information
and Privacy Branch

Security Classification - Classification de sécurité
PROTECTED A

Our File - Notre référence
95ATIP-962

Your File - Votre référence
95-2394IM

Date
95-05-31

REQUEST FOR ACCESS TO HOMICIDE FILES


RECEIVED

JUN 06 1995

'F' DIV.
INFORMATICS

Your correspondence of 95-04-12 refers.

Ms FARDEN's research request was forwarded to the D/Commr.
Corporate Management, on 95-05-19, and same was subsequently
approved. The original memorandum with the approval is attached,
together with the initial package submitted in support of the
application.


J.P. BLAIS, Insp.

Post-it FAX TRANSMITTAL MEMO	
FEUILLETS POUR FAC-SIMILÉ 7671B	
DEBRA FARDEN	FROM: RCMP - Criminal
	TO: Operations - Regina
	PHONE #: 780-551
TELECOR: 244-1201	FAX #: 780-7252

OIC Informatics

RECEIVED

JUN 2 1995

C.O. OFFICE

D/C Corporate Management

Director, Public Affairs
and Information

Security Classification - Classification de sécurité PROTECTED A
Our File - Notre référence 95ATIP-962
Your File - Votre référence
Date 95-05-19

Ms D.H. FARDEN - RESEARCH REQUEST - SECTION 8(2)(j) PRIVACY ACT

The attached Research Application and Undertaking Form, submitted by Ms Deborah Helen FARDEN, Saskatoon, Sask., pursuant to Section 8(2)(j)(i) and (ii) Privacy Act (PA), requires your approval.

Ms FARDEN's research centers on women murdered in Saskatchewan during the years 1988 to 1992 inclusive. She is conducting this research as part of her Masters' Program and has the approval of the Ethics Committee of the University of Saskatchewan. The purpose of the research is to make visible the "intimate and domestic character" of this type of crime and determine what can be learned about its prevention.

Section 8.(2) PA states:

Subject to any other Act of Parliament, personal information under the control of a government institution may be disclosed

(j) to any person or body for research or statistical purposes if the head of the government institution

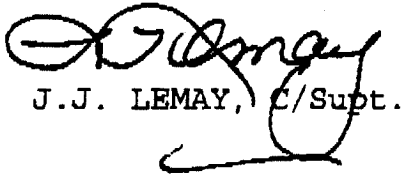
(i) is satisfied that the purpose for which the information is disclosed cannot reasonably be accomplished unless the information is provided in a form that would identify the individual to whom it relates, and

(ii) obtains from the person or body a written undertaking that no subsequent

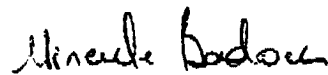
. . . 2

disclosure of the information will be made in a form that could reasonably be expected to identify the individual to whom it relates.

The Commanding Officer "F" Division feels that Ms FARDEN's request meets the requirements of Section 8.(2)(j)(i) and (ii) PA and has recommended approval accordingly. I have reviewed this request and agree that it does meet the PA requirements and, therefore, recommend approval. To this end, I am also attaching the file as well as copies of the questionnaire and information sheets, submitted in support of this application, for your information.


J.J. LEMAY, C/Supt.

"APPROVED"


M. BADOUR, D/Commr.
Corporate Management

Appendix D

The StarPhoenix Dates and Pages

Appendix G

APPENDIX D - THE STARPHOENIX DATES AND PAGES

YEAR	DAY & DATE	PAGE#
1988	Mon. Feb. 22	?
	Tues. April 26	A10
	Tues. June 7	A1
	Wed. June 8	A1
	Wed. Aug. 17	A1
	Mon. Aug. 29	?
1989	Mon. Jan 9	A6
	Tues. Jan 10	A3
	Mon. Aug. 14	A7
	Tues. Aug. 15	A12
	Mon. Aug. 21	A2
	? Aug. 28	?
1990	Tues. May 1	A9
	Wed. May 16	A12
	Thurs. May 17	A3
	Fri. May 18	A11
	Thurs. June 21	A1
	Mon. June 25	A1
	Tues. June 26	A1
	Tues. June 26	A2
	Fri. June 29	A6
	Mon. July 23	A1
	Tues. July 24	A3
	Fri. July 27	A3
	Tues. Sept. 4	A11
	Wed. Sept. 5	A16
	Thurs. Sept. 6	A7
	Wed. Nov. 7	A3
	Thurs. Nov. 8	A2
	Mon. Dec. 31	A2
1991	Sat. March 9	A6
	Tues. March 12	A6
	Thurs. May 9	A11
	Sat. May 11	A15
	Sat. July 13	A1
	Mon. July 15	A1
	Thurs. Aug. 23	A7
	Wed. Oct. 2	A6
	Fri. Dec. 20	A1
	Mon. Dec. 23	A8
1992	Tues. Dec. 24	A7
	Mon. Jan 6	A2
	Fri. March 27	A14
	Mon. Aug. 17	A3
	Tues. Aug. 18	A1
	Tues. Sept. 28	?

	Tues. Oct. 13	A3
	Wed. Oct. 14	?
	Wed. Dec 23	?
	Thurs. Dec. 24	A1
	Thurs. Dec. 24	A6
1994	? Oct. 26	A15
	Wed. Nov. 2	?
	Fri. Nov. 4	?
	Thurs. Nov. 17	A1
	Sat. Nov 19	?
	Thurs. Dec. 8	?
	Thurs. Dec. 15	A1
	Thurs. Dec. 15	A3
	Fri. Dec. 16	A1
	Sat. Dec. 17	A6
1995	Wed. Jan. 4	A1
	Wed. Jan. 4	A2
	Sat. Jan. 7	A8
	Sat. Jan. 14	A1
	Fri. Jan. 20	A1
	Sat. Jan. 21	A1
	Mon. Jan. 23	A1
	Tues. June 13	A3
	Wed. June 14	A10
	Thurs. June 22	?
1996	Sat. June 1	A1
	Sat. June 1	A3

? July 5

?

Appendix E
Interview Questions

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These questions will form the basis of the interviews with the survivor(s) of attempted intimate femicide. They are, however, not exhaustive. Questions may be added or deleted to further illuminate the issue in question: what can we learn from women who have survived an attempted intimate femicide.

Who knew about the violence against you? How did they know about it?

Tell me about the day your partner/ex-partner tried to kill you?

What happened?

How did you manage to escape being killed?

How did you perceive your relationship with your partner?

How did you view the violence you experienced?

How did you view any threats of violence that you experienced?

What steps did you take to deal with your fears?

What steps did you take to deal with the threats and acts of violence from your partner?

Do you believe any person or institution could have helped to prevent the attempt on your life? How?

How has this experience affected your life in the years following the attempted femicide?

SECOND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I will show each participant a copy of the transcript of her first interview and give her an opportunity to read it prior to the second interview. The following questions will guide the second interview.

1. Is there anything in the transcript that you would like to add, change, or clarify?
2. Is there anything else that you want me to know about your experience of surviving an attempted intimate femicide?
3. What, for you, is the most important thing you talked about in our first interview? Why is that important?
4. These are the themes that I saw emerging from our first interview. Do these themes reflect what you see as important? Why or Why not?

Appendix F
Participants' Consent Form

APPENDIX F

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research project of Deborah H. Farden, A Masters Student in Counselling (Educational Psychology) at the University of Saskatchewan. The purpose of the study, called Woman Killing: Intimate Femicide in Saskatchewan 1988 to 1992, is to describe femicide, the murder of women, in Saskatchewan. A second purpose of the study is to see what we can learn about the prevention of intimate femicide from women who have survived an attempt on their lives by intimate male partners.

I understand that I will be interviewed on at least two (2) occasions regarding an attempt on my life by a male partner or lover. These interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed. These audio-tapes and transcriptions will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. One year after the thesis has been accepted by the university, these tapes will either be destroyed or returned to me.

Any information which I provide will be kept strictly confidential, although a summary of my experience will appear in the research. Identifying details will be altered or eliminated as much as possible. I will have final approval of this summary and it will not be included without my consent. In addition, I understand that the researcher will advise me of any new information which may affect my decision to continue in the study.

Two factors limit the assurance of confidentiality that the researcher is able to provide me. First, if I appear to be threatening harm to myself or others, the researcher is obliged to intervene in ways that may require breaking confidentiality. As well, since researcher-participant is not a privileged relationship, the researcher may be obliged to reveal information from the interviews if subpoenaed to testify in a court of law. This may include turning the audio-tapes and transcriptions of my interviews over to the courts.

Should I wish to talk to someone about feelings arising as a result of the interviews, I understand a counsellor at the Saskatoon Family Service Bureau will be available to me at no charge.

I will be given a brief explanation of the study and will have an opportunity to ask questions. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time.

While I may not receive any direct benefit from my participation, this study may help others to better understand the violence I experienced. This study may also help in the development of public policy aimed at preventing the killing of women by intimate male partners or ex-partners. Further, the knowledge gained may benefit those in the helping professions who come in contact with women who have experienced violence in intimate relationships.

If I have any questions or concerns regarding this research or my participation in it, I may contact the following people:

Research Supervisor
Dr. Fred Reekie
University of Saskatchewan
College of Education
Department of Educational Psychology
Phone: 966-7728

Researcher
Deborah H. Farden
Graduate Student
Phone: 244-0127
382-7976

I understand the nature of the study and acknowledge that the contents of the consent form have been explained to me. I have read and understand the above information and agree to participate in this study.

Date: _____

Name of Participant (Please Print): _____

Address of Participant: _____

Phone Number of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Name of Witness (Please Print): _____

Signature of Witness: _____

Appendix G
Ethics Committee Approval



**UNIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON ETHICS IN HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION**

(Behavioral Sciences)

NAME AND EC #: Dr. F. Reekie (D.H. Farden)
Department of Educational Psychology

94-45

DATE: April 19, 1994

The University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation (Behavioral Sciences) has reviewed the revisions for your study, "Woman killing: Intimate Femicide in Saskatchewan 1988-1992" (94-45).

1. Your study has been APPROVED.

PLEASE SUBMIT A REVISED CONSENT FORM TO THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES.

2. Any significant changes to your protocol should be reported to the Director of Research Services for Committee consideration in advance of its implementation.

Melias Oke

for Dr. C. von Baeyer, Chair
University Advisory Committee
on Ethics in Human Experimentation, Behavioral Science

cc: Dr. C. von Baeyer